

“The policy which we have . . . maintained towards the Indians, and which ought to be maintained at all hazards and under all circumstances, is most rigidly to keep faith with them.” *Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister.*

# Our Betrayed Wards

BY

R. N. WILSON

*A story of “Chicanery, Infidelity and the Prostitution of Trust”*

Transcribed, curated and with additions by Chris Willmore

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# Our Betrayed Wards

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A MEMORANDUM written in the interests of his friends and neighbors, the Blood Indians, by R. N. Wilson, of Standoff, Alberta (Indian Agent from 1898 to 1911 for the Blood and Peigan Indians) as an effort to ventilate – with the object of securing redress – certain complaints of that people against the present administration of Indian Affairs.

“The Indians are especially under the guardianship of Parliament. . . . It is the duty of the Government to protect the Red Men, it is the duty of the Government to see that they get full justice.” – Sir John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister.

“The Reserve should be preserved exclusively for the Indians. If they possessed more than they desired, to agree to its sale or being leased was an entirely different matter.” – Hon. Alexander McKenzie, Prime Minister, 1877.

## The Treaty of 1877

In the introduction to his excellent volume on the Indian Treaties of Canada, the Honourable Alexander Morris says: “One of the gravest of the questions presented for solution by the Dominion of Canada, when the enormous region of country formerly known as the North-West Territories and Rupert’s Land was entrusted by the Empire of Great Britain and Ireland to her rule, was the securing of the alliances of the Indian tribes and maintaining friendly relations with them.”

The much-desired alliances and friendly relations with the Indians inhabiting the great expanse of country between Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains were established by means of seven treaties, officially known by the numerical order in which they were concluded.

These were:

Treaty No. 1 – Concluded in 1871 at the Stone Fort.

Treaty No. 2 – Concluded in 1873 at Manitoba Post.

Treaty No. 3 – Concluded in 1873 at the northwest angle of Lake of the Woods.

Treaty No. 4 – Concluded in 1874, at Qu’Appelle.

Treaty No. 6 – Concluded in 1875 at Lake Winnipeg.

Treaty No. 7 – Concluded in 1877 (The Blackfoot Treaty).

In 1876, after the signing of Treaty No. 6, there remained in what is now Southern Alberta a large tract of country inhabited by the Bloods, Blackfoot and Peigans, three kindred tribes speaking a common language, and the Stonies and Sarcees, who were two small tribes of “foreign” Indians, residing there in amicable association with the powerful Blackfoot tribes.

The territory then held by these five tribes is practically all of Alberta lying between the International Boundary line and the Red Deer River, and its area was

50,000 square miles according to the estimate of the Minister of the Interior, the Honourable David Mills, in his annual report for 1877.

As the Blackfoot tribes were much feared, and as it was known that the Sioux, nearby in the United States, following their victory over the ill-fated General Custer, were endeavouring to effect a confederacy of all the plains Indians against the whites, the securing of a treaty with them by our Government was considered to be a matter of vital importance.

Thus we find that the Government first sent a party to prepare the way for the Treaty Commissioners of a following year. Explaining the cost of this deputation, Mr. Cartwright told the House of Commons: "It was considered advisable last summer to send certain parties in advance of the Commission to propitiate the Indians who were warlike."

The Honourable David Laird, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, and Colonel J. F. McLeod, C.M.G., Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police, were appointed Commissioners to negotiate with the Blackfoot and associated Indians for the cession to Canada of the aboriginal title to the said lands, estimated to be 50,000 square miles, which they did in 1877 at a large meeting of the Indians held at the Blackfoot Crossing of the Bow River, east of Calgary.

Chief Commissioner Laird, in his report to the Government, referring to one of his meetings with the Indians preliminary to the signing of the Treaty, says: "*We further explained the terms outlined to them yesterday, dwelling especially upon the fact that by the Canadian law their reserves could not be taken from them, occupied or sold without their consent.*" (See page 257, Morris' Treaties of Canada with the Indians).

The Chief Commissioner is also reported to have said to the Indians, on September 17th, 1877, while negotiating this Treaty: "*A Reserve of land will be set apart for yourselves and your cattle upon which none others will be permitted to encroach.*" (Morris, page 268).

The Blackfoot Treaty (No. 7), was signed on the 22nd September, 1877, and amongst other considerations it provided for one large permanent reserve on the Bow River and South Saskatchewan to accommodate the Blackfoot, Bloods and Sarcees, also a large area for ten years.

#### The Treaty of 1883

Subsequently these three tribes were given separate reserves, concerning which change Sir John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister, said to the House of Commons in 1885: "Originally these Reserves were chosen to meet the views of the Indians. They had to be coaxed into the Treaty and selected their own locality, the lands where the bones of their ancestors lie being their favourite reserve," and "We have with success induced them (Bloods, Blackfoot, etc.) to surrender that immense area along the South Saskatchewan which they were to have for ten years. That was found a barrier to settlement (probably because it was within the C.P.R. zone W.) and the

Indians have been induced to surrender that very large section and take up separate reserves." Hansard, page 3374, 1885<sup>1</sup>.

When finally surveyed, the five separate reserves retained by the Indians under the Blackfoot Treaties were of the following areas in square miles:

Blood	Reserve	-----	547½
Blackfoot	"	-----	470
Peigan	"	-----	181
Stony	"	-----	109
Sarcee	"	-----	108

These with two small timber limits of 11½ and 6½ miles respectively, make in the aggregate 1,433½ square miles, or less than 3% of the land ceded to Canada by the Treaty.

The separate Reserve for the Blood Indians was located between the St. Mary's River and the Belly River in Southern Alberta, and was formally fixed in another Treaty, made at a General Council of the Blood Indians on the 2nd day of July, 1883, the Canadian Government being represented by Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney and Colonel J. F. McLeod, C.M.G. The present writer, then a member of the old North-West Mounted Police Force, was on duty at this Council and an interested spectator of the Treaty making.

In this Treaty of 1883, in the fifth paragraph, following a geographical description of the present Blood Reserve, are the words "*to have and to hold the same unto the use of the said Blood Indians forever.*"

These words in the Treaty of 1883 merely expressed the meaning of the term "Reserve" that was attached to it by all of the parties to these Treaties, and were consistent with the assurance given to the Indians by Governor Laird as repeated above in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the memorandum, which understanding was for thirty-five years thereafter accepted and honoured by the different administrations of the Government of Canada holding power during that period.

#### The Bloods Become Ranchers

Meanwhile, in 1894, the Bloods, being no longer the savages of a few years before, were persuaded to make a beginning in the cattle business, which they did by exchanging ponies for heifers. Minister of the Interior T. M. Daly, who had visited the Blood Reserve, told the Commons: "The Peigans, Blood and Blackfoot are going to

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<sup>1</sup> From the debates of July 14, 1885: "There is a difficulty in moving the Indians from the reserves. Their reserves were originally given under treaty, and it is with great difficulty we can get them to give up reserves. Originally, these reserves were chosen to meet the views of the Indians. They had to be coaxed into a treaty, and selected their own locality, the lands where the bones of their ancestors lie being their favorite reserves. We have, with success, induced them to change, and to surrender that immense area running along the South Saskatchewan, one mile on each side, which they were to have for ten years. That was found an almost insupportable barrier to the settlement of the country, and the Indians have been induced to surrender that very large section and to take up separate reserves. These Indians are the Blackfeet and Bloods, but though belonging to one great nation, they do not get on very well together, and we have to put them on separate reserves."

become great ranchers. They are even selling their ponies to buy cattle.” Hansard, page 5555, 1894.

Subsequently, in order to assist indigent Indians and returned school boys with a start in the cattle business, the Government purchased breeding cattle with money voted by Parliament for the purpose and issued them to the Indians under a “loan system,” the feature of which was that an Indian would be given, say, five two-year-old heifers on condition that in some future year the Department could demand from their progeny five other two-year-old heifers in return, all the rest of the progeny of the original five heifers being the clear private property of the Indian.

Minister Daly’s prophecy, so far as it concerns our subject, was so well founded that in 1916, though they had suffered very heavy losses in two disastrous winters, notably that of 1910-11, we find the Bloods in the lead of all Canadian Indians engaged in cattle raising, the Annual Report of the Indian Department for 1917, page 29, saying: “The largest herds are held by the Blood Indians, who own upwards of 4,00 head of the finest beef cattle in the west.”

During this period the Indians were induced by the Department to breed up their horses, to which end as many as thirty improved stallions, supplied by the Government, were in use on the Blood Reserve at one time, until in the course of twenty years or so, the Indian pony was to a very large extent replaced by a useful type of general purpose horse. According to the report of the Indian Department for 1917-18<sup>2</sup> the horses of the Blood Indians numbered more than 3,600.

About 1904, as the Blood Indians had more grazing facilities on their Reserve than their own stock could utilize for some time to come, there was submitted to them a proposition to grant grazing rights to a single company to graze for ten years 7,000 cattle for an annual payment of \$5,000 cash and some other consideration. The Bloods gave their approval to this scheme at a general meeting of the tribe called for the purpose, and a Company was organized by Donald McEwan, of Brandon, to utilize the said grazing rights, which Company operated for its term of ten years, when said Company, or its successor, secured a renewal at an increased rental, so that in 1917 they were paying the Blood Indians \$10,000 per annum for the privilege of grazing 10,000 head of cattle on the Reserve.

#### The Bloods Become Farmers

In 1907, their live stock interests being on a satisfactory footing, the Bloods turned to farming, and as they had on hand \$8,000 or \$10,000 derived from the McEwan lease, they decided to purchase a large steam plowing outfit for their breaking and to utilize the McEwan income as a revolving fund from which to give reimbursable assistance to new farmers until the fund had financed a fair start in agriculture for every capable Blood Indian who desired to farm. With the sanction of the Department they went ahead, with such success that though their farming was brought to a standstill for several years by severe drought, we soon read in the Indian Department Report: “The Blood Indians during the season of 1916, by their own

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<sup>2</sup> I am unable to find this figure in the Indian Department reports for 1917 and 1918.

efforts and without any financial aid from the Government of Canada, produced 65,150 bushels of wheat on 2,600 acres, and 26,980 bushels of oats on 768 acres. They grew approximately 7,150 bushels of table vegetables, harvested 7,600 tons of hay and green fodder, and prepared 2,820 acres of summer-fallow and new breaking for the next year's crop."

#### Creditable Advancement

This with one exception was the largest yield of grain on any Reserve in Canada, and the Blood Indians maintained the same standing in 1917 for wheat, and increased their hay crop to 10,000 tons.

The value of the Blood Indian beef production in 1917 was \$60,000, being the largest of any Indian Reserve in Canada.

#### The Advent of Mr. Meighen

In 1917, Mr. Meighen became Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. That year marked the abandonment by the Indian Department, so far at least as the Blood Reserve was concerned, of the traditional Canadian policy of Indian administration, and it marked the end of the prosperity of the Blood Indians, who, from that time forward, were not to be permitted to enjoy the peaceful possession of their Reservation as guaranteed to them by Treaty. The established and successful Canadian policy of advancing the Indians on their Reserve was abandoned in favor of a policy of Indian Reserve exploitation in the interests of covetous white men.

#### Surrender of Land Demanded

On the 15th February, 1918, following an official campaign of great pressure, the Blood Indians were asked to vote on a proposition to sell about 90,000 acres of their Reserve, which proposition they had already voted unfavorably on in the preceding June.

#### Coercive Measures

By enrolling as voters a number of boys under age, by boldly purchasing votes with tribal funds and official favours, and by intimidating other Indians, the officer in charge of the operation managed to show a small majority in favour of the land sale.

The Head Chief, representing the true majority of the tribe, at once filed at Ottawa charges of fraud, bribery and intimidation and requested the Department not to accept the surrender without an investigation of his charges, following which protest no further action was taken by the Department with the document and it was not sent up to the Council for acceptance.

Any attempt to give an adequate description of the compulsion that was exerted upon the Bloods in this surrender campaign of 1917-18 would require more space than we have at our disposal for this memorandum, but a few illustrations will serve to show the dangers to which Indians are exposed when a Government official considers that it is "up to him" to secure land from them by hook or crook

### Indian Farming Officially Obstructed

The first measure taken to force the Bloods to sell land was to stop the development of their farming enterprise, to appropriate and use for other Agency purposes the aforesaid lease funds upon which the farming extension was dependent, and to inform the Indians that no more land would be broken up for new farms until they sold part of the Reserve.

Thus, in 1916 and 1917, when western Canada was being “stumped” by public speakers urging greater production of grain, the Blood Indians, while they had a good crop from their old land, were not permitted to respond to the greater production appeal, though they had the land, machinery, horses, plenty of willing men and the necessary capital to operate their traction breaking plow outfits.

There was no reason for holding back the farming development at that time other than the determination of the officials in charge to “freeze” the Indians into a land sale, it being understood, of course, that the more they utilize their Reserve the less likely are the Indians to sell it.

The irony of the predicament of the Blood Indians in 1917 will be appreciated upon reading the closing paragraph on page 1049 [of the] Hansard of April 23rd, 1918, in which Mr. Meighen says: “We would be only too glad to have the Indian use this land if he would. Production by him would be just as valuable as production by anyone else. But he will not cultivate this land and we want to cultivate it for him; that is all. We shall not use it any longer than he shows a disinclination to cultivate the land himself.”

As there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the Minister in making that statement, it is clear that the Indians were the victims of mischievous misrepresentation, because they were then making good use of their Reserve and had for many years shown not only willingness but genuine eagerness to extend their farming and stock-raising industries to the utmost.

### Disreputable Tactics

The land surrender matter was constantly mixed up with other Agency business, Indian after Indian being made to understand that fair and ordinary treatment at the hands of the Department was dependent upon signing a pledge to vote “Yes.” For instance, one of the opposing faction, an honest, hard-working Indian, was told: “If you come down here (to the Agency) and vote against the surrender, your family will starve next winter,” while another opponent of the land sale was offered an appointment of Minor Chief if he would change his vote from “Nay” to “Yes,” a Minor Chief’s medal being held up before his eyes during the conversation. Individual cases of bribery and intimidation, however, would fill a book.

The ration house maintained on the Reserve by the Department for the double purpose of assisting the destitute and providing a medium for the distribution of the beef and flour of the self-supporting Indians was, during this period, turned into a vote-getting machine. Aged and infirm Indians who had for years been on the Department’s “premanently destitute” list had their rations shut off entirely and were

forced to become beggars in order to live, while able-bodied Indians prominent among the “land seller” faction were to be seen carrying out of the ration house sacks of beef heavier than they could handle without assistance.

In this extraordinary campaign of official duress, the charge was made that trust monies belonging to non-assenting Indians were by the manipulation of official Agency records transferred to the credit of “land sale” supporters, thus administering a punishment and a reward with the same stroke.

Implements purchased with tribal funds and therefore the property of the whole tribe were used to buy surrender votes, and the Agent’s power to assist his Indians with credit orders upon merchants and dealers for vehicles, tents, machinery and the like, was used to a remarkable extent in vote getting.

#### Officially Blacklisted

Indians who could not or would not consent to land sales were blacklisted and systematically persecuted. Some of them, with money on deposit in the Agency derived from their personal earnings, were not permitted to withdraw their money while they remained on the “wrong” side of the controversy, and, contrariwise, other Indians who had no deposits whatever but were “right” in the official estimation were permitted to draw money at the Agency as cash advances against future earnings that were not even in sight. As Agency cash on hand or in the bank is almost entirely made up of balances from earnings held in trust for individual Indians, the effect of the above discrimination was to give the “Yeas” the use of the “Nays” money.

The immense power of the Government, which on an Indian Reservation – as a reader of the above will have observed – is so far-reaching and enters into the intimate affairs of everyday Indian life so much that it practically controls the well-being of every inhabitant was, during this period, exercised by an unusually resourceful official to make miserable the lives of the “Nays” and their families, while the “Yeas” basked comfortably in the sunshine of official favour.

Such was the situation on the Blood Reserve, with its 1,100 Indian inhabitants sharply divided by the policy of the Department into two antagonistic and excited groups, still awaiting the reply of the Government to the Chief’s protest against the fraudulent land sale vote of 15th February, when the Indian Department launched its “Greater Production” campaign on the Reserve in 1918.

#### The Cardston Lease Affair

The first “Greater Production” leasing scheme and *the only one submitted to the Blood Indians for their consent*, was a proposition that the Government be permitted to lease to white men for farming purposes, for a period of five years, a block of about ten sections (about 6,000 acres) close to the town of Cardston.

As this ten-section farming lease was presented to the Indians as a patriotic measure, it was assented to by a large majority led by the Head Chief, who had opposed the out and out sale of Reserve lands, said assent being given at a General Meeting of the tribe called for the purpose on 31st March, 1918, in accordance with The Indian Act.

The two conditions then voted upon of particular interest to the Indians were, (1) that *all* rental proceeds of the lease should be paid to the Indians in per capita distribution of cash; and (2) that all straw grown on the leased land should become the property of the Indians for the feeding of their own cattle.

After the said ten sections had been leased by the Department to white farmers and the Agent had advised the Indians that the rentals therefrom would bring them during the term of the lease annual per capita payments of about \$24, it was arranged that the Department should distribute \$6 per capita on account.

This payment was made on the 30th May, 1918, but before receiving the money the Indians were unexpectedly required to sign a paper which was not explained to them. Some thought that it was a receipt for the \$6, others were told something else, but all signed because they were informed by the Agent that unless they did so the money would be sent back to Ottawa and no payment made until another year.

#### Sharp Practice

At the conclusion of the payment, the Head Chief, who does not speak or read English, was handed a copy of the paper which they had signed, and upon taking this away for translation, it then became known for the first time that they had signed another farming lease of a quite different character, cancelling the first one, taking from the Indians the straw *and changing the \$6 payment on account into a payment in full.*

An important point to be noted here is that this fraudulent loss of the straw produced on several thousand acres of lessees' crop in the following year was a contributing cause of the disaster which overtook the Blood Indian cattle as hereinafter shown.

#### Pretty Low-Down

After being deprived of 75 per cent. or 80 per cent. of their benefits from this ten-section farming lease by the substitution of one legal document for another, the victims expected prompt and full payment of that little which was left to them, the annual \$6 per capita promised in the name of the King to be paid on or about the 1st of April, but the western officials in the Department held back the payment for five weeks in each of the years 1919 and 1920 to enable a Government employee armed with a rifle to traverse the Reserve and obtain the consent of each dog owner, under a threat of shooting his or her dog, to the deduction of dog taxes from the said \$6.

The Indians requested the Department to discard the document that was substituted and to settle with them according to the original and only legal one, but the Government made no response to their appeal. As the revenue from this particular farming lease does not appear to be shown in the Auditor General's Reports, the claim of the Indians for \$24 per capita annually for five years, instead of the \$6 per capita now being paid to them, is based, as to amount, upon the Agent's statement in 1918 to his Indians, and it is assumed to be correct because the Department has not intimated anything to the contrary during the two years that this grievance has been before it.

### A Well-Disposed People

It should be observed that the Blood Indians promptly agreed to the only two leasing propositions that were ever formally submitted by the Indian Department for their consideration. One was the Donald McEwan proposition, as per paragraph 21<sup>3</sup> above, which was the only grazing lease ever asked of the Bloods by the Government, but it was cheerfully granted and amicably continued for fifteen years. The other was the ten-section farming lease just dealt with in paragraphs 42 to 50<sup>4</sup>, which was also freely conceded by the Blood Indians as soon as the desire of the Government was conveyed to them.

### Prussianism

As there was, therefore, no ground whatever upon which the Blood Indians could be considered as “recalcitrant” in such matters, the policy of ruthlessness then adopted by those in authority and still in force on the Blood Reserve is quite inexplicable unless we believe that it was deliberately planned to put the Blood Indians out of the cattle business and to otherwise reduce them in order to force them through poverty to sell land, the peaceful enjoyment of which was guaranteed to them in solemn treaty by the Dominion of Canada.

Ruthlessness is a strong term which should not, and would not, be applied to Indian administration were there not so many authentic cases of official harshness to justify it, fortified by the callousness with which responsible officials have ignored the complaints of the unfortunate victims of the Department’s right-about change of policy.

### Weakening the Indian Act

Speaking in the House of Commons on the 23rd April, 1918, the responsible Minister, Mr. Meighen, is reported to have said: “Of course the policy of the Department will be to get the consent of the Band, wherever possible, and to meet the Bands in such spirit and with such methods as will not alienate their sympathies from their guardians, the Government of Canada.”<sup>5</sup> The Minister was then asking

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<sup>3</sup> The last paragraph of *The Bloods Become Ranchers*.

<sup>4</sup> Comprising *The Cardston Lease Affair*, *Sharp Practice* and *Pretty Low-Down*.

<sup>5</sup> From the Hansard (8-9 George V, 1918, Vol. CXXXII), p. 1048: “The Indian Reserves of Western Canada embrace very large areas of land far in excess of what they are utilizing now for productive purposes. We have well under way in that country a campaign for the utilization of those reserves, for stock raising, for grain production, and, for the present, of course, in many cases, merely for summer fallowing. But we do not want to have this campaign entirely at the mercy of the Indian bands themselves. We do not want to have those bands stand in our way and say to us: Notwithstanding the necessities of to-day, you must keep off all this vacant land unless we choose to give it up to you and ourselves forego the great privilege of roaming on it in its old, wild state. We want to be able to utilize that land in every case; but, of course, the policy of the department will be to get the consent of the band wherever possible, and to meet the bands in such spirit and with such methods as will not alienate their sympathies from their guardian, the Government of Canada. We do not anticipate that we shall come into very serious conflict with any band. It is only the more backward bands that offer any objections at all to the utilization of their land.”

Parliament for power to lease Indian Reserve lands to white people without the consent of the Indians.

Owing apparently to the scarcity in the House of Commons of Members who have made an intimate study of Indian affairs, the long-established and always necessary *safeguards surrounding Indian lands were removed from the Indian Act* without anyone in the House seemingly being aware of the fact that they were assenting to the “scrapping” of so many of Canada’s Indian Treaties, though several Members did express their suspicion that the new legislation foreshadowed a raw deal to the Indians.

#### Peremptory Seizure of Reserve Lands

And the raw deal was not long delayed. While the ink was barely dry on the farming lease so cheerfully granted by the Blood Indians, as we have shown, the Indian Department astonished both Indians and whites by suddenly adopting “strong arm” methods in the Spring of 1918, the first of which was to peremptorily dispossess the Indians of the 90,000 acres which they had so recently declined to sell, and to lease it out to white men for the grazing of sheep, cattle and horses. In order to give this arbitrary action a color of reasonableness at Ottawa, the executive officers of the Department trumped up the utterly false charge that the Blood Reserve was empty and unutilized, in face of the fact, well known to them, that there were at the time grazing on the Reserve close on to 17,000 head of cattle and horses, belonging to the Indians and the old leasing company that was paying them \$10,000 per annum for grazing rights.

#### Land Leased to Government’s Friends

Contrary to the Minister’s assurance to Parliament that tenders would be called for “in every case where there is time and circumstances permit,” these leases were let privately, though there was no reason for haste, unless it was a desire to get the land into the hands of certain parties before the public knew anything about it. Mr. Martin Woolf, the Liberal M.P.P. for Cardston, in an address in the Alberta Legislature that year, charged that the Blood Reserve leases were made a political matter of by the Dominion Government and granted to his present and past political opponents. A scrutiny of the political records of the beneficiaries would no doubt settle that point.

#### Eviction of Indians

The area covered by these grazing leases included the homes of many Indians who were ordered to vacate in favour of the lessees, while others were dispossessed of their fenced pasture fields. Hay lands used by many Indians, some for 20 and 25 years, and upon which they depended for cattle feed and their own living, were also handed over to the white lessees to be used by them as hay lands.

This 90,000 acres of leased land was located in two blocks, one of about 40,000 acres of heavy grass land at the south-western edge of the Reserve, and the other of about 50,000 acres of short grass at the northern end.

The 40,000-acre block contained much of the best hay land on the Reserve and also the winter range of the Indian cattle which grazed out all the year round and resorted to the shelter, open springs and high grass of this locality in times of extreme cold, deep snow, and storm.

A twelve-mile fence was promptly built by the lessees or by the Government to prevent further access to this area by the Indian cattle, but the white lessees were not compelled to keep their stock within it and the sheep were grazed in many flocks of thousands each over the central unleashed portion of the Reserve upon which the Indian cattle and horses were now concentrated.

#### Unlimited Leases

The northern 50,000-acre block leased was the less desirable land of the Reserve, therefore, in order to give the lessees the maximum of advantage over the Indians it was left unfenced so that the lessees' stock were free to leave it and graze over the unleashed central part upon which the Indian cattle were dependent for grass. Many of these north-end leases were frank "dummies" by means of which a lessee would be rented an open unfenced section or two, drive as many cattle or horses as he pleased to it and then leave them to graze at will on the unleashed land.

As many of the Blood Indians had been long enough in the cattle business to perceive that this systematic and wholesale overstocking of their Reserve would result in disaster to their own live stock interests, they made strong protests to the Agent, especially against the presence of sheep on their cattle range, but could obtain no satisfaction.

#### A Super-Official in Charge

It should be observed that on February 16th, 1918, the Government had by Order-in-Council appointed a Special Officer to take charge of "Greater Production" on western Indian Reserves *under the personal direction of the Minister and operating independently of the regular organization of the Indian Department*, the first of whose duties was, as per the said Order-in-Council, "*to make proper arrangements with the Indians for the leasing of Reserve land which may be needed for grazing, for cultivation, or for other purposes and for the compensation to be paid therefor.*" (I. D. Report for 1919, page 10). – Appendix, paragraph 23<sup>6</sup>.

*These duties were not performed* with regard to the said 90,000 acres of leases, as no arrangement of any sort was proposed to or discussed with the Blood Indians, who knew nothing of any intention to place sheep on their Reserve until the sheep were actually there in thousands and those Indians who resided within the said area were ordered to vacate their homes in favour of the Governments' lessees.

As for compensation to the tribe for the lands so leased or to individual Indians for losses sustained by the confiscation of their personal holdings, nothing of the sort was proposed then, or has been during the three years that have since elapsed with the confiscation in full force.

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<sup>6</sup> The second paragraph in the *Grazing Leases* section of the Memorial of 1920.

As nearly all of the individual sufferers from the confiscations were on the "black list" created for the land sale campaign, the "Greater Production" grazing leases were in the first place presented to the Bloods in the light of punishment for "recalcitrancy," and nothing has been done since, such as the offer of compensation, to remove that aspect from the situation. Thus the Indians were left to consider themselves the victims of ruthlessness.

When some of the Indians were expressing in appropriate language their opinions of the lack of wisdom in crowding their cattle range with sheep, and their indignation at the rough dispossessions to which they were being subjected, the Agent sent an exaggerated report to Ottawa causing the Government to fear that the Indians contemplated taking the law into their own hands and expelling the invaders from their Reserve, a measure which the Bloods, who are a tractable people, had not even considered.

#### Terrorizing the Indians

In consequence of said report of the Agent, however, a higher officer of the Department appeared upon the Reserve with three armed policemen and the belated information that the leases had been granted as a war measure and would be maintained by force if necessary, to accentuate which the Head Chief of the Bloods was told that: "*Anyone who even objects to what is being done on the Blood Reserve or anyone who advises anyone else to object will be arrested and prosecuted,*" which was a considerable threat to make in support of a bunch of predatory leases that were absolutely devoid of moral sanction and of doubtful legality when written.

#### Cattle Management

For about 16 years the Blood Indian cattle, though belonging to a large number of individual owners, have been handled under what is called the range herd system, one feature of which was the holding of two roundups each year for the various purposes of branding the calves with the numeral brands of their mothers, dipping all cattle for mange, and counting. The necessary expenses have always been paid out of the cattle management fund kept up by a percentage tax on beef sales, which fund also provided the salary of the white stockman in general charge of the cattle, the wages of his Indian assistants and the cost of whatever hay was required to feed such of the cattle as could not remain out on the open range all winter.

Previous to 1919 such routine duties as roundup work, with expenses paid from locally raised funds, were performed as a matter of course in their proper season without the necessity of obtaining special authority from Ottawa, but following the disorganization of the Department incidental to the so-called "Greater Production" activities, the then Agent at the Blood Reserve states that he received orders not to incur any expense whatever exceeding \$10 without special permission from Regina.

#### Round-Up Obstructed

In 1919, when Spring roundup time arrived, and the Agency roundup outfit was all ready to begin the important work of calf branding, dipping the whole herd of

3,700 or more for mange, as then required by the regulations of the Department of Agriculture, and counting the whole herd by brands in order to make a new official cattle record to be signed by the recently appointed Indian Agent, the Government took the extraordinary course of refusing to permit the usual or any expenditure for said work and gave orders to the effect that the Agent could take his office staff and other such help and do the roundup work on foot.

This refusal of funds was maintained after it had been explained that the work was technical, requiring eight or ten riders skilled in handling range cattle, and each rider with at least six saddle horses. That Spring roundup work, so vital to the cattle business of the Blood Indians, would not have been done at all had not the McEwan ranch successors come forward and paid the Indian roundup expenses as well as their own.

#### Indian Agent Warns the Government

Under date of June 3rd, 1919, the Indian Agent of the Blood Reserve reported to his superior on the discouraging prospect of getting hay, owing, as he expressed it, to the reserve "being pretty well pastured off," which meant that the Reserve was overstocked by the lessees to the point of endangering the interests of the Indians. It does not appear that any attention was paid to this communication.

A month later, on July 3rd, the Agent repeated his warning, this time making the definite statement that the hay crop was going to be very short, that he did not think that there would be enough for the wintering of the Indians' stock, and mentioning as additional causes the large acreage cut over for hay in the previous year and the effects of a "dry spell" then experienced.

#### Criminal Neglect

As the first duty of the Government was to protect the interests of the Indians, one would expect that the situation disclosed by those two reports would be met by the prompt cancellation of the grazing leases that were responsible for the rapidly increasing trouble, but nothing was done to show that the responsible authorities took any interest in the matter.

When in 1919 the proper time arrived to hold the short Fall roundup to brand with the brands of their mothers the calves born since the Spring roundup, or too young at that time for branding, the required authority was gain withheld by the Government, the method of obstruction in this case being the non-acknowledgment of official letters from the Blood Agency on the subject. While awaiting the needed authority of the Government, the Fall roundup was postponed from week to week, until winter set in and the large number of calves remained unbranded and were thus lost to their Indian owners because by the following Spring roundup they would be weaned and not following their mothers.

As each cattle owner paid his share of the management expenses from his revenue from beef sales, it followed in practice that whatever hay he delivered at the winter cattle feeding points was treated as a separate transaction and paid for out of said management fund, so that in putting up the 2,000 tons, or thereabouts, of hay

normally needed to winter their cattle, the Blood Indian haymakers who owned cattle and those who were not cattle owners received the same price per ton, which, however, by common consent, was usually half or less than half of the current market price of hay.

#### Brainless Interference

For the hay-making season of 1919, the local officials on the Blood Reserve received orders that no hay was to be furnished from the cattle management fund but that the range herd system was to be changed forthwith to a system of individual care and management, to which end orders were given for each Indian owner to take his cattle home and look after them.

Without dwelling upon the consequences that would have arisen from the fact that many of the cattle were the property of widows, orphans and of children absent at the boarding schools, the proposed innovation was of senseless impracticability because the cattle were wild and could not be kept at the individual homes of the Indians without special preparation in the way of strong fences, corrals, etc., the construction of which would have entailed individual outlay of money that the Indians did not possess.

Moreover, the Reserve had by now been so extensively overstocked that the cattle were in no condition to stand the amount of driving about that this ill-advised order entailed, and there was not sufficient grass at or near the homes of the individual owners to feed them even had it been otherwise possible to keep them there.

#### Indian Chief Appeals to Ottawa

These circumstances the Head Chief outlined in a telegram to the Minister and suggested that owing to the shortage of grass, 3,000 tons of hay would be no more than a safe provision, much of which he said could be put up by the Indians at a nominal price per ton. In response to his telegram, the Chief received immediately the encouraging reply from the Deputy that the matter was being given urgent and immediate attention.

#### Disobedient Officials

If, as he supposedly did, the Minister gave immediate and urgent orders that enough hay be procured to protect the Indian cattle, *those orders were not carried out*, and after the hay-making season had been consumed in palpable trifling with the situation, the Blood Indian cattle went into the winter with an insufficient amount of feed.

#### A Destroyed Industry

Thus the Department, by permitting certain of its executive officers to arbitrarily interfere with a business of which they were totally ignorant, viz., range cattle management in Alberta, sanctioned the destruction of a creditable industry that had been painstakingly fostered by itself from a start of 50 heifers until the herd

numbered thousands and had become the main support of a large Indian population. Eighteen months of wholesale overstocking of the Reserve as shown had the inevitable result of running the grass and hay and though the local agent had twice warned his superiors of this condition and though there was a six weeks' cancellation clause in the leases, the lessees had too much "pull" and were not molested.

All warnings having failed to induce the Government to cancel its "Greater Production" leases and restore the Reserve to the use of the Indian owners, and it being evident at the beginning of the Winter that *the hay supply was about two-thirds short*, the Government decided to remove a thousand head of Indian cattle to save them from starvation, the McEwan lease successors having hurried their cattle from the Reserve for the same reason, leaving the "Greater Production" lessees undisturbed.

Instead of securing cars before gathering the 1,000 head of cattle, orders were received to gather and hold them for instructions, which meant feeding them the invaluable hay that had been secured with so much difficulty and which, as stated, was already insufficient to winter the weak cattle that would have to be steadily fed later on in the season.

#### Waste of Invaluable Hay

The Indians complained that the 1,000 head of cattle were thus held and fed for several weeks awaiting shipping instructions from Regina, repeatedly applied for, during which period they had to be fed up to twenty loads of hay each day. As hay prices were then, on account of the drought of that year, soaring to unheard of figures, the total quantity of hay fed to these cattle before shipment had a very high replacement value (baled hay at many times the normal cost had to be shipped in later on from far distant points), and if it were taken into account the large number of Indian cattle that subsequently died for want of that hay, it would probably be found that the needless holding of these cattle cost more than the price that 600 of them were presently sold for.

Cars having finally been procured for shipping, 600 of these animals were sold for 5c to 5¼c per pound, delivered at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, to which point the Indians were charged with the freight, together with whatever losses occurred on the way. This was less than half the normal value of the cattle, but as the Indian Department officials in charge of the shipping did not take the trouble to identify the brands on the cattle, but merely counted the number placed in each car, they might as well have given them way for nothing so far as benefit to individual Indian owners was concerned.

#### Neglect to Record Brands

The individual cattle brands of the Blood Indians are numerals and at the time that these cattle were shipped the brands were indistinguishable owing to the growth of winter hair and could not be accurately read by anyone without clipping on each animal the area of the brand, which clipping was not done in this case. The responsible officers after vainly attempting to read the brands without clipping

contented themselves with merely counting the animals, therefore, the 600 head of cattle were lost to the rightful owners and any statement of individual ownership subsequently prepared for the Department and Indians would have to be fictitious because founded upon guesswork.

#### Freezing Their Feet

The other 400 head of Indian cattle crowded off their Reserve by the "Greater Production" leases were, to save them from starvation, shipped by rail to the Stoney Reserve, west of Calgary. These were criminally given en route a mid-Winter dipping for mange, and delivered with frozen feet at their destination where 150 of them are reported to have died, the survivors being returned to the Blood Reserve in the following summer with a bill against them of \$4,300. All of this loss and cost was imposed upon the unfortunate Blood Indians rather than disturb the "Greater Production" lessees, who had, within twelve months, been permitted by the authorities to remove from the Blood Reserve thousands of tons of cattle feed which under any system of fair dealing would have been retained for the use and profit of the Indians.

#### Calamitous Losses

According to the published Report of the Department for 1919, the Bloods had in the Spring of that year a total of 3,742 cattle which of course would not include the Fall calves lost through maladministration as per paragraph 77<sup>7</sup>. In the following Spring the survivors were counted and found to number about 1,200, later claimed by officials to be 1,300, which after allowing for 600 sold and a maximum of 250 slaughtered for beef, left a shortage of more than 1,580 which had starved to death on their Reserve from which the Government had, as stated, within one year allowed strangers, backed by armed police, to remove thousands of tons of fodder. (See also paragraph 48<sup>8</sup>).

#### No Sympathy for Indians

"I do not think we need waste any time in sympathy for the Indians," said Minister Meighen when, on the 23rd April, 1918, he was putting through the House of Commons the legislation which made these atrocities possible. The Honourable Minister had no cause to worry. There was no sympathy for the Indians. With 17,000 head of cattle and horses grazing upon it in 1917, the Blood Reserve was already stocked to its average safe capacity for all-the-year grazing in that climate, and the issuing by the Department in 1918 of the 39 additional grazing leases which ruined these unfortunate people was either an act of wanton recklessness of Indian rights or of deliberate intention to punish the Indians. If the latter, it was certainly successful.

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<sup>7</sup> The second paragraph in *Criminal Neglect*.

<sup>8</sup> The second paragraph in *Sharp Practice*.

### Destruction of Indian Horses

And the losses were not confined to cattle. Throughout the forty years of their occupation of the Reserve, the Blood Indians wintered their horses of all classes by grazing out on the open range, none being stabled except when in use. During this winter of 1919-20 their horses died of starvation in such numbers that by Spring no less than 600 fatalities had been reported for record. A deplorable feature of this phase of the calamity was the fact that the work horses were the heaviest sufferers, a total of 454 work horses being reported dead of starvation up to the arrival of the green grass. Some of the Indians who were farmers lost all of their teams, while many had nothing left with which to either ride, drive or work, and were thus obliged for the first time in their lives to travel the long distances of that country on foot.

### The "Fortunate Indian"

"The Indian is very fortunate," said the Honourable Minister to the House of Commons. "He has all he had before, and now, in addition, he has the rental for this land," to which the Indian replies: *"You have killed my cattle and my horses, by taking from me the grass that I had before, and though three years have passed I have yet to see the first dollar of the promised grazing rental."* A large sum of money was received by the Department from the grazing leases but none of it was paid to the Indians and it has been of no benefit to them as it was kept in a general fund at Regina or Ottawa, entirely beyond the control of the Indians, and was mostly wasted by the Government in fruitless efforts to repair the damage caused by the ill-advised leases. A reading of the somewhat elaborately camouflaged Account in the Auditor-General's Report, 1919-20, pp. 1-137 and 1-183 will show that about \$58,807 was expended for cattle management, mainly on imported baled hay, when \$15,000 would have been ample had there been no "Great Production" (?) leases.

### Suppression of the Facts

When last Spring (1920) the Blood Reserve was encumbered with the carcasses of cattle that had died of starvation, some of the Indians who had been to school read in the public press an announcement by one of the executive officers of the Department of Indian Affairs that the cattle losses on the Blood Reserve were but 5 per cent. or 6 per cent., whereas at that date there were hundreds of carcasses that the Indians were forbidden to skin, though the hides were then in active demand at good prices. Young Indians offered to remove these hundreds of hides at 50c each and turn them over to the Government for sale, but were forbidden. If that ruling was not made for the purpose of suppressing the real losses of the Blood cattle by starvation, what was the reason for wasting so many valuable hides? (They were then worth several dollars each).

### Destruction of the Bull Herd

The pure-bred bull herd of the Blood Indians is variously reported as numbering from 66 to 82 in 1919, but we will give the authorities the benefit by accepting the lower figure for the purpose of this complaint. As these bulls

represented a large amount of capital, special care should have been taken to preserve them, instead of which we find another instance of wanton destruction of Indian property. 35 were sold, apparently to Gordon, Ironside & Fares, as “canners” at about 5c per pound (no extra charge for pedigrees), the discreditable sale being smoothed over by reporting that the animals were old, whereas from the purchases of bulls shown in the Auditor-General’s Reports it is seen that the majority of the 66 must have been in their prime.

#### A Falsified Return

After disposing of 35 bulls as above, the authorities sold to a friend one of the best in the herd for \$50, recording the purchaser *under a fictitious name* and classing this bull also as *old*, though the complaint states that he was a three-year-old bull which had recently cost the Agency more than \$450. It is a noteworthy circumstance that the sale of this animal, with the false report to the Government covering it, and the sacrifice sale of the other 35 pedigreed bulls, together with that of the 600 cattle, are reported to have been all put through by the Commissioner’s office at Regina from whence an officer was specially sent to the Blood Reserve who operated independently of the local Indian Agent. The latter officer stated that the details of these transactions were kept from him so completely that the Blood Agency was unable to furnish the Department with the usual cattle returns called for at the end of the fiscal year, three months after said sales, and that he, the Indian Agent, was forced to sign these papers in blank and forward them to the Commissioner’s office for the insertion of information unknown to and withheld from him. The Indian Agent is supposed to be the responsible representative of the Government in all local affairs.

This left at least 30 pure-bred bulls on the Reserve for the Winter, presumably the pick of the herd, and though the Government’s executive officers fed hundreds of tons of hay to the Gordon & Ironsides cattle, which need not have been fed to them before sale, they neglected to properly feed the Indian bulls and allowed 22 of these valuable young pedigreed animals to starve to death, leaving but 8 survivors the following Spring. Then they turned around and purchased 6 inferior animals at a cost of between \$200 and \$300 each from the same parties to whom had been recently sold for \$50 the bull so superior that he is said to have been worth any three of the 6. An inspection of the seven animals would no doubt prove or disprove that estimate.

#### The Rise and Ruin of a Vital Industry

The cattle raising industry of the Blood Indians, from its modest beginning of 50 heifers in 1894 had, under careful and efficient management, with the active assistance of the Department, made a steady growth – high quality of the stock being considered as important an objective as large numbers – until in 1904 their cattle reached the total of about 4,000 head of exceptionally well bred animals. Then they passed through a high wave of prosperity, touching the 7,000 mark more than once during the next seven years, but two disastrous winters brought the record total down to below 4,000 again in 1911, which was not much if at all exceeded afterward, and we find the official count of 1919 showing 3,742 head.

In the history of the Alberta range cattle business there have occurred a few severe winters that caused exceedingly heavy losses. Two such hard winters were those of 1908-09 and 1910-11. In one of these the Blood Reserve was covered for a protracted period with deep snow with a hard crust which the cattle could not break through in order to reach the ample supply of grass underneath. In the other winter snow storms of unprecedented fury drove the cattle in thousands clear off the Reserve and into the foothills of the Rocky Mountains where heavy losses occurred. Grazing with the Indian cattle on the Reserve during both of these bad winters were the cattle of the Donald McEwan Ranching Company in charge of their experienced and high-salaried manager, with a full crew of skilled cowboys (working alongside of the Indians under the Department's stockman), but though everything possible was done for the cattle, the Company's losses were quite as high as those of the Indians. There was no maladministration there. There is no parallel between those old losses and the losses herein complained of, because in the Winter of 1919-20 the damage was almost entirely due to scarcity of feed of which the Blood Indians had an ample supply until, as charged, they were heartlessly deprived of it in the interests of white men. It is of great significance that the Indians lost no horses worth mentioning in the bad winters of 1908-09 and 1910-11 because there was plenty of grass and the horses, following their habits, were able to break through the snow to it with their feet and otherwise protect themselves. In 1919-20 the horses died in hundreds for the simple reason that the Reserve had been eaten off bare by the sheep and cattle of the 38 "Greater Production" leases and the Indian horses and cattle literally starved to death.

During the high wave period in 1904-1910 inclusive, the Blood Indians branded no less than 9,212 calves, or an average for the seven years of over 1,300 calves per annum. The best single year was 1909, when at the annual dipping for mange the Bloods found by careful count and tally by brands that they owned more than 7,300 cattle, and that year they branded more than 1,600 calves. Last year, owing to the maladministration of the Government, their calf branding was reduced to 130, *two years of so-called "Greater Production" having set them back more than 22 years*, as we have to back in the records as far as 1898 in order to find a calf branding as small even as 190.

The final example that we have to here relate of the malevolence which seems to have pursued the ill-fated Blood Indian cattle to their destruction at the hands of the executive officers of the Department, and which brings that portion of our story down to 1920, is that the authorities would not, or at least did not, by the purchase of an adequate number of bulls last year, provide for the proper breeding of the female cattle that survived the disaster of the previous winter; thus the unfortunate Indians were by said executive officers deprived of whatever chance they otherwise had of a normal and natural recovery from the losses which had been so discredibly imposed on them.

### Reduction

While, as we have shown, the Blood Indian as a stock grower was being eliminated, or while, at any rate, his participation in that industry was being reduced to the minimum that would justify the charge that he was a holder of surplus and unutilized land, another set of operations were in progress directed at the profits which the individual Indians had already secured from their farming and cattle interests. The effect of not being permitted to enjoy the financial benefit of success in good years, added to the disappointment of bad years, would be, of course, to discourage all effort on the Reserve and to dispose its Indian owners toward selling land, which seems to be the single settled policy of certain officers of the present Government towards the Bloods.

### Juggling with Trust Money

The Indians complain that in September, 1918, the year before the principal calamity, the executive officers of the Department gathered up on the Blood Reserve and sold a mixed lot of Indian cattle, including three-year-old steers, two-year-old steers and young breeding cows, the orders being to "take everything that is fat." For these cattle the authorities are said to have received more than \$42,000, the steers in the shipment being sold for \$168 each, at the then price of about 14c per pound, live weight.

Blood Indians whose *private property* these cattle were have been unable to secure an accounting of the said \$42,000. The owners were bluntly informed that *the "Indian share" would be \$50 a head* and after a delay of about six months credits on that basis were carried to some of their accounts. They subsequently learned that the said executive officers had taken about \$20,000 of these personal Indian funds and had re-invested it in other cattle which were, after long being fed with hay, in turn sold for about \$20 a head less than they had cost in the first place, the loss from this absolutely unwarranted speculation with trust moneys falling upon the Blood Indians.

The object in selling in 1918 that \$42,000 lot of cattle is not known. It was not done to provide needed revenue for the Indian owners, as is shown by the subsequent use made of the money, and it was not done to free the Reserve of surplus beeves, because they had no more steers than were required for domestic consumption and they had to take unmaturing two-year-old steers and about ninety cows to make up the shipment.

In consequence of having made the above sale of cattle, including, as stated, all steers down to two-year-olds, there was no beef supply left for the ensuing winter and for many months the Department's executive officers brought in and slaughtered large numbers of the Indians' young cows in calf, *throwing out the unborn calves day after day* to the serious loss of the Indians, and to the astonishment of those of them who had heard so much of the importance of "Greater Production" of food supplies on Indian Reserves.

Another lot of Indian cattle were sold for about \$15,000 by said executive officers of the Department, and of this sum but \$2,000 or \$3,000 was credited to the

accounts of the Indians who owned the money, and no explanation given of the balance, though the Indians learned indirectly that the greater part of the funds had been used to buy cattle, concerning the branding or disposal of which no information was available.

#### Seizure of Private Funds

During this campaign of compulsion that the Department's executive officers were pursuing on the Blood Reserve in order to force the Indians into a land sale, thousands of dollars of personal Indian income derived from beef and grain sales and on deposit at the Agency in trust for them individually, were peremptorily seized by said officers for the ostensible purpose of re-investment in breeding cattle. Protests of the Indians against this unjustifiable use of their private moneys were repeatedly made, but were met with the statement that it was the order of the Government and must be obeyed. Some Indians objected that they had already had enough cattle, others that they wanted to handle their own money, but protests availed nothing and the cash was arbitrarily deducted from their accounts in single amounts of \$300 and more, the total running into thousands of dollars which, after repeated appeals to the Government for adjustment, are still outstanding. The laws of Canada seem to provide no method by which Indians can, as a matter of right, secure a hearing of such claims.

The Indian victims of this irregularity were not allowed to "clap eyes" on the cattle alleged to have been purchased with their money. Some few cattle were actually bought by the Government with some of this money, but instead of passing them over to the Department's stockman for branding and delivery to the Indians who were entitled to them, they were handled in such a way that Indians who made repeated trips to the Agency for the purpose of getting these cattle did not succeed in even seeing them. Eventually some of these Indians were informed that the cattle had died, others that the animals had been turned out on the range, but most of them believe, and with good reason, that the heifers charged to them were mythical, which belief became a practical certainty when subsequent roundups failed to disclose their presence on the Reserve.

#### A Poor Place to Leave Cash

The Indians also charge in this connection, a charge which, like many of the others, can easily be proven from the Agency books, that money was, without their consent, taken from their individual deposits and used to purchase cattle which were then branded with the Government or tribal brand only, so that when they would be subsequently sold or otherwise turned into revenue the proceeds would go into some general fund and be quite lost to the individuals whose money had bought them. This, of course, was direct confiscation of cash deposits, and as a result of these confiscations of cash, as described in this and the preceding two paragraphs, there are hundreds of Blood Indians who believe today that *the most unsafe place for them to leave their money is in the hands of the Department of Indian Affairs*, which for so

many years in the past possessed, as it was then entitled to possess, their full confidence.

It is not intended to herein suggest that the Department's officials personally benefitted from any of these irregularities, the main object of which seems to have been to cripple the Indians, while in some cases possibly a secondary purpose was to secure funds for unauthorized local expenditure that could not be met by Head Office grants. So far as the Indian was concerned, it mattered little what was done with the money of which he was so unjustly delivered, because he was the permanent loser in any case.

#### Still More Dishonor

Another bright scheme then adopted in the general plan of reduction in the income and assets of the Blood Indians, was to make a ruling that all progeny of cattle issued to Indians in long past years under the loan system as explained in Paragraph 18<sup>9</sup>, should be declared to be the property of the Government, under the pretence that the word "loan" in those old agreements did not merely created a debt of the original number of heifers issued, but that it covered their progeny for all time to come.

Accordingly, as beef steers and other cattle, such as dry cows, that originated under the loan system, were sold or butchered, the Government boldly *confiscated the proceeds from the unfortunate Indians* who'd had for so long considered themselves cattle owners, and *turned the money back into Consolidated revenue* or some such receptacle in Ottawa where we find in the Auditor-General's reports for 1918 and 1919 the sum of \$14,695.25 received from the Blood Agency for "Beef sold," with another amount from the same source shown in the next year.

Here we see a former administration of Indian Affairs going to Parliament for money with which to purchase cattle to be given to needy wards of the nation under certain definite promises, and a few years later this present administration of Indian Affairs brushes aside the promises, confiscates the cattle, turns them into cash and returns it to the Public Treasury, presenting a complete reversal of sound public policy, as indefensible as it was retrogressive.

The General Scheme of "Greater Production" on Indian Reserves, as inaugurated by the Department in 1918, embraced four phases which were put into effect on the Blood Reserve:

1. The leasing of 6,000 acres of land for farming purposes, as dealt with in paragraphs 42 to 50<sup>10</sup>;
2. The destructive grazing leases mentioned in paragraphs 56 to 69<sup>11</sup>;
3. The taking over of about 5,000 acres of the Reserve by the Government to farm on its own account; and
4. The assisting of Indians to extend their individual farming.

<sup>9</sup> The second paragraph of *The Bloods Become Ranchers*.

<sup>10</sup> *The Cardston Lease Affair, Sharp Practice, and Pretty Low-Down*.

<sup>11</sup> *Peremptory Seizure of Reserve Lands, Land Leased to Government's Friends, Eviction of Indians, Unlimited Leases, A Super-Official in Charge and Terrorizing the Indians*.

The last mentioned feature of the "Greater Production" activity, while it was really the only commendable undertaking of the four, was also the most neglected, and the farming efforts of the Indians were interfered with, retarded and discouraged in a number of ways in favour of the Government farm which was given right of way over everything. A few illustrations will show how this was done.

#### Seizure of Indian Machinery

The two large traction plowing outfits owned by the Indians and bought with their money, which had been kept in enforced idleness for two years by the Department as stated in paragraphs 30 to 34<sup>12</sup>, were, in the Spring of 1918, taken, without the consent of the Indians, and used for plowing sod on the Government farm at a time when they should have been doing similar work for the Indians under Class 4 of the "Production" scheme, which Indian plowing was in consequence delayed until the months of August and September, long after the proper season for breaking or plowing sod, when it had to be done under the most unfavorable circumstances, it being well understood that in Southern Alberta breaking land, to be of value, must be done in the Spring or early Summer while moisture is still in the top soil and the grass unmaturing.

In the Fall of 1918, though their grain harvest was much reduced by drought, the Indians were not permitted to thresh their own wheat, with their own threshing outfit, purchased by themselves, until said machinery had first been used to thresh the harvest on the Government farm, so that shrinkage caused by delay and bad weather would fall upon the Indian farmers.

Seed drills in use by the Indians, and bought with their own money, were taken from them by the Department's executive officers and sent to the Government farm, where no less than 13 drills were to be seen seeding at one time while Indian farmers a short distance away were *forced to seed their farms broadcast by hand*.

#### Unjust Discrimination

Further evidence along the same line is seen in the fact that at the time of the seed drills incident the Department's executive officers furnished No. 1 Prize Wheat to seed the Government Farm, but obliged the Indians to do their seeding with No. 3 Wheat.

Moreover, many of the new Indian farms started under Class 4 of the "Greater Production" scheme would have remained unfenced throughout their first crop year had not the local Agent misunderstood instructions from his superior and furnished the Indians an advance of wire with which to protect their crops, for which action he was officially censured.

#### An Iniquitous Transaction

In the same Fall (1918) the officials in charge of the Government Farm sold to one of the grazing lessees a quantity of flax straw on condition that said officials

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<sup>12</sup> *Indian Farming Officially Obstructed.*

should force the Indians to sell to the said lessee 1,000 tons of their privately owned hay at \$10 per ton, when hay was then selling on the open market at from \$15 to \$18 a ton, with a heavy demand. The hay permit clause in the Indian Act was invoked in order to apply the necessary pressure upon the Indians who, after much protest, delivered the hay to the said lessee. The Indians were subsequently informed that the flax transaction netted the Government Farm about \$900, so in this single instance *the Indians were personally mulcted in the sum of from \$5,000 to \$8,000 in order that the Government Farm might gain \$900.*

#### Deprived of Official Leadership

A grievance of less importance than many of the others is that for some years past the Department has left unfilled the vacancies in the ranks of the 15 Minor Chiefs of the Bloods provided for in the Treaty of 1877 and now reduced by death to about half of that number. The Indians report that last Fall they were officially advised that these vacancies were soon to be filled by the Government but that the selections would not be made until another land sale vote was polled. The impression left on their minds was that these promotions were to be used as bribes.

Last year, at the request of the Indians, the Department decided to give up the 5,000-acre Government Farm established in 1918 under Class 3 of the "Greater Production" scheme and divide it amongst some of the numerous members of the band who had always desired to farm the land. The officials issued to Indians a block of said plowed land at the north end of the Reserve unconditionally because the Government had failed to grow a crop on it in three seasons, but with regard to several thousand acres of said Government Farm situated at the southern end, where the land is good and crops can be nearly always grown, the said officials merely took the names of the Indian applicants for this land and said that it would not be finally allotted until after the next land sale vote. These Indians also understood, though nothing was plainly stated, that getting their farms would be dependent upon voting as desired by the Government, and it will be interesting to see how the men on that particular list did vote at the third polling which occurred a few days ago.

#### A Disastrous Appointment

As the Order-in-Council of 1918 appointing an Indian Commissioner (see Appendix, paragraph 23<sup>13</sup>) virtually handed over to him the Indian Affairs of three Provinces to be managed by him directly under the Minister, and independently of the established organization of the Indian Department, it followed that since that time the headquarters office at Ottawa had practically no authority over the live stock and farming interests of the Blood Indians, so vital to them, and the Department seems to have also relinquished its control of their other affairs, outside of educational matters. *To the unusual character of said appointment is due, beyond doubt, the principal of the troubles of the Blood Indians,* as it is inconceivable that the Ottawa officials of the Department who had with marked success controlled the

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<sup>13</sup> The second paragraph in *Grazing Leases* in the petition below.

Blood Agency for thirty or more years, would, with their experience, have thrown the Reserve wide open, as was done in 1918, and destroyed the Indian stock.

#### Indians Memorialize the Government

A Memorial, setting forth most of the foregoing complaints, and some others, was presented to the Minister of the Interior on behalf of the Blood Indians on the 31st May last, to which the Indians subsequently added and filed with the Indian Department a ratifying document bearing the signatures of 200 members of the Tribe, including the Head Chief and all of the Minor Chiefs, which latter document also authorized the present writer to take such measures on their behalf as might be necessary to properly ventilate their grievances. (See Appendix).

In the Memorial, the Indians requested that their Reserve be returned again to their peaceful possession as provided by Treaty and that they be compensated for the losses sustained by them in consequence of the Treaty-breaking leases, or, alternatively, they requested that the administration of their Reserve since 1917 be thoroughly investigated by a Judge acting as Commissioner with court powers under The Inquiries Act, Chapter 104 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1906.

#### “Justice Delayed Is Justice Denied”

The Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, in June last, forwarded the Blood Indian Memorial, together with a report upon it by his Deputy, to the Indian Commissioner at Regina for his report, but this latter official was permitted to ignore the matter and had not reported upon it to February of this year.

Up to the present time the Government has declined to admit its responsibility for the losses sustained by the Indians in consequence of the “Greater Production” leases and by failing to cancel the leases it has declined to restore the Reserve to their use as memorialized to do.

#### Another Demand for Land

While continuing to avoid discussion of the Memorial with the Indians, and without replying to it, the Government informed them, last Fall, that the only way open to them by which they could free themselves of their misfortunes would be to surrender part of their Reserve, from which it was inferred that the 90,000 acres would be kept from them until they had surrendered and that reparation, if made, would be from the sale proceeds of their own land.

This announcement was followed during the recent winter by the usual preparatory campaign, in which the Indian voters were made to feel the pangs of hunger, while the many thousands of dollars of their confiscated and misappropriated funds were still withheld from them, until at the end of last month, their powers of resistance were seemingly at a minimum, their finances being at about the lowest point in the year.

### More Intimidation

The propitious moment having apparently arrived for another attack upon their land holdings, the Indian Commissioner appeared at the Blood Agency, accompanied, it is reported, by a force of no less than ten Mounted Policemen, in order to record another vote on the land surrender, the demand this time being, according to a recent item in the Press, 126,000 acres, but to their credit the Indians declined to be intimidated by the display of armed force and voted down the proposition, according to said newspaper report, by a poll of 144 votes to 99, or a majority of 45 against the land sale, which would seem to be an appropriate way to meet the “strong arm” business methods of a misguided Indian administration.

### Nepotism Run Wild

It would be unfair to the case of the Indians to conclude this Memorandum without mentioning that in their heretofore futile efforts to obtain a hearing of these numerous complaints – any one of which would have been very promptly investigated and disposed of under the Indian administration of former years – no reasonable explanation of the immovability of the Government has been heard other than the explanation of the “man on the street,” that, as rendering justice to the Blood Indians would involve an admission of blunder or fault upon the part of a public official who is well known to be a protégé and relative by marriage of the Leader of the present Government, it is considered in Governmental circles to be much more desirable that the Indians should suffer than that any of themselves should risk the displeasure of the Premier by attempting to relieve them.

The weight of this point is not dependent upon showing that there has been direct interference or a “hands off” order from the Premier, who has indicated the position with sufficient clearness in various exaggerated statements to the House of Commons concerning the services of said relative. (Hansard, July 5th, 1919, pp. 4664 – 4669)<sup>14</sup>.

There is no intention here to criticize the mere appointment or promotion in the public service of a friend or relative by a Minister, but if said appointee blunders in administration, causing serious losses to a third party, the latter’s claim to a hearing should not be denied in the interests of the personal connection, and if such relationship between two public officials is used to prevent a Tribe of unfortunate Indians from securing common justice from the Government – of a kind identical to

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<sup>14</sup> The original cites incorrect page numbers (4814-4819). This is probably a reference to Meighen’s praise for W. M. Graham found on pages 4664-4669: “Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Superintendent General of Indian Affairs): Mr. Chairman, [...] I would give the House a statement of the Greater Production Work on Indian farms in Western Canada which has been carried on since February 16, 1918, under the charge of Mr. W. M. Graham. [...] [N]o more successful enterprise has ever been launched in Canada, or, up to the present time at all events, no better managed enterprise. The results will be good from the point of view of returns from the money invested; they will be better still from the point of view of the good resulting to the Indian, who is taking more interest in his work than he did and is keeping busy instead of idle. But the greatest value of all accrues so far as the nation is concerned in the tremendous increase that Mr. Graham has been able to secure in the actual product of the soil upon those Indian reserves in Western Canada.”

that which white persons are securing through our Courts every day – it become nepotism of a particularly vicious character. In this connection it is notable that a series of questions concerning the Blood Reserve, recently asked by Members in the House of Commons, brought forth in sixteen cases answers which were either so palpably evasive, so glaringly misleading or were so frankly mendacious as to indicate that under the present administration Departmental officers are either not permitted to speak the truth to Parliament or that they are afraid to do so in connection with certain matters.

The Blood Indians still hope that the Government will be induced to release them from the intolerable situation described herein and to restore to them their Reserve and its affairs in a condition equal to that in which it was when the Government took it over at the outset of its “Greater Production” campaign in 1918.

The Indians are not asking the Government to accept any unsupported statements as facts. Some of these charges can be proven from the official records at Ottawa, many can be proven by the books of the Blood Agency, while a larger number of the most serious complaints will require the taking of the sworn testimony of many witnesses on the Blood Reserve, which for obvious reasons, must be done before a Judge or some tribunal quite independent of the Department of Indian Affairs and of the Government.

#### The Plain Duty of the Government

The proposition that is presented to the Government in this case is really a very simple one. 200 Indians, constituting a two-thirds majority of the adult males of their Tribe, headed by their Principal Chief and all of their Minor Chiefs, have made written charges of maladministration of their affairs, and have memorialized the Government for relief or for an impartial investigation. If the Indians are to be flatly denied redress in such a matter, what are their rights, and how can they be exercised?

OTTAWA, ONT., APRIL 7th, 1921.

## APPENDIX

## The Blood Indian Memorial of 31st May, 1920

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To The Honourable Arthur Meighen, P.C., K.C.,  
Minister of Indian Affairs,  
Ottawa.

The Memorial of the Blood Indians inhabiting the Blood Reserve in Southern Alberta, respecting certain grievances relating to the administration of their affairs and the Reserve, sheweth:

That your Memorialists occupy a Reserve set apart for them in 1877 under Treaty Number 7 and an amended Treaty made on the 2nd July, 1883, lying between the Belly River and St. Mary's River in Southern Alberta, having an area of 547.5 square miles.

Your Memorialists, numbering about 1,150 souls, are and have for many years been engaged in farming on the said Reserve and in raising cattle and horses thereon.

Farming Lease Surrenders of 23rd March and 30th May, 1918

In the year 1918, in consequence of an agitation for the greater production of food stuff rendered necessary by the war, it was suggested to your Memorialists that they should surrender to His Majesty the King, for a period of five years or until the expiration of one year after the conclusion of the war, a portion of their said Reserve to be used for the purpose of producing grain, and at a Council of the Chiefs and principal men of your Memorialists, duly called and held on the 23rd of March, 1918, for the purpose of assenting thereto, a surrender of about 6,080 acres of your Memorialists' Reserve was made to His Majesty the King, for the purposes aforesaid.

The said surrender provided amongst other things:

(a) That such surrendered lands should be leased to such person or persons as would pay the greatest yearly rental therefor;

(b) That, after deducting the expenses of management all moneys received from such leasing should be paid in cash equally amongst your Memorialists;

(c) That the Lessees should not take more than two crops consecutively off any land farmed, the land to be summer-fallowed the third year from breaking the sod;

(d) That all noxious weeds should be destroyed each year before seeding;

(e) That all straw grown on leased lands should be kept by the Lessees for the cattle of your Memorialists;

(f) That the Indian Agent of the Reserve should be entitled to enter said leased lands with your Memorialists' cattle to feed the same with such straw;

(g) That at the expiration of said leases said lands should be returned in good agricultural condition, and that all improvements made thereon by the Lessees should become the property of your Memorialists at the expiration of the said leases.

Between the date of the making of the said surrender on the 23rd day of March, 1918, and the 30th day of May, 1918, the lands so surrendered were leased by His Majesty the King to various white men, and your Memorialists were informed by their agent that the annual rentals to be received from said leases would approximately amount to \$30,000, or on the average, after deducting expenses of management, to about \$24 per head annually of your Memorialists.

That your Memorialists having been promised by the Indian Commissioner an advance payment on account of said rentals of \$10 a head were subsequently notified by the Indian Agent that they would be paid only \$6 per head, and your Memorialists having assembled on or about the 30th day of May, 1918, with their families and tents at the Indian Agency, pursuant to order so to assemble issued by the Indian Agent, for the purpose only, as your Memorialists believed, of receiving payment of said \$6 per head, were then informed by said Indian Agent that unless your Memorialists would sign a document then presented to them, but which was not translated or explained to them, the expected payment of \$6 per head would not be made.

Your Memorialists being thus faced with the alternative of either signing said document or not receiving said payment, signed the said document of the purport of which they were not then aware.

Subsequently your Memorialists learned that the document which they had been induced to sign under the circumstances aforesaid, was a new surrender of the said 6,080 acres of their said Reserve upon terms and conditions very materially different from and far less favorable to your Memorialists than those contained in the said surrender of the 23rd day of March, 1918.

The said surrender of the 30th day of May, 1918, did not contain the terms of the said surrender of the 23rd day of March, 1918, set forth in paragraph four (4) hereof and lettered (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g), but instead thereof contained the following terms, viz:

(h) His Majesty shall pay to each member of your Memorialists' Band the sum of \$6 in each year for six years or so long as the said surrender shall remain in force;

(j)<sup>15</sup> The Government to have the free use of whatever land on the Reserve it may require for the greater production of food producing grain, on condition that Indian labor shall be utilized as far as possible and feasible at current rates; the land to revert when the Government no longer requires the same for greater production of food producing grain.

Under the surrender of the [30th day of May]<sup>16</sup>, 1918, your Memorialists would have been entitled to the annual distribution of only about \$6,900, resulting in the very serious loss of \$20,700 per annum.

Under the surrender of the 23rd day of March, 1918, His Majesty the King was required to lease the said lands to such person or persons as would pay the greatest yearly rental, the whole benefit of which, less management expenses, belonged to your Memorialists, whereas under the surrender of the 30th day of May, 1918, the amount receivable by your Memorialists is fixed at \$6 per head per annum, and no

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<sup>15</sup> There is no (i) in the original, presumably to avoid confusion with Roman numerals.

<sup>16</sup> The original here reads '23rd day of March'.

provision is made for the distribution amongst your Memorialists of any balance which may remain at the expiry of the leases.

Under the surrender of the 23rd day of March, 1918, your Memorialists were entitled to all the straw grown on the leased lands for fodder, while under the surrender of the 30th day of May, 1918, such straw belongs to the respective lessees of the lands.

The surrender of the 30th day of May, 1918, contains no provision for rotation of crops, or for summer-fallowing, or for the keeping down of noxious weeds.

#### Establishment of a Government Farm

Under the provisions of the surrender of the 30th day of May, 1918, about 4,800 acres of your Memorialists' Reserve were taken, by the Department of Indian Affairs, for the purpose of farming the same in aid of greater production of food-producing grains, and although your Memorialists were not aware, when they signed the said surrender, that they had agreed to permit the Government to use so much of their Reserve for that purpose as it might require, your Memorialists do not object to the said surrender on that account, as they would willingly have agreed to such a provision had they been requested so to do, though they are aware of no reason why they should not have a compensation for the use of said land, but your Memorialists aver that the mode in which the said 4,800 acres have been farmed has been of serious damage and loss to them because while prior to the year 1918 your Memorialists enjoyed the services and instruction of three Government Farm Instructors – whose entire services were utilized for their benefit – when the Government began to operate said 4,800 acres it did not appoint a new Farm Instructor for the district known as Farm 3 in the place of the Farm Instructor for such a district who had resigned, but instead of so doing, appointed a foreman for said Government Farm whose whole time and attention was and is devoted thereto, whereby Indians in said district known as Farm 3 were and are deprived of the services of a farming instructor as enjoyed by them up to 1918, and because your Memorialists were wholly deprived of farm machinery which they had formerly used and which was purchased with their funds and which machinery was placed on said Government Farm, the consequence whereof being that many of your Memorialists who are sowing grain this year are obliged to sow the same broadcast by hand, though no less than 13 seed drills are in operation on the Government Farm.

In further support of your Memorialists' contention that the existence of the said Government Farm on the Blood Reserve is detrimental to the farming interests of your Memorialists, they say that in 1918 two large traction plowing outfits, the property of your Memorialists, were taken without the consent of your Memorialists and used for plowing sod on the Government Farm, though said machinery was urgently needed by your Memorialists for similar work, which was in consequence delayed until the months of August and September, long after the proper season for breaking or plowing sod, when said work of your Memorialists had, if done at all, to be accomplished under the most unfavorable conditions, much to the detriment of your Memorialists' interests, it being well understood that breaking, to be of value,

must, in Southern Alberta, always be done in the Spring and early Summer while moisture is still in the top soil and the grass unmaturred.

Furthermore, your Memorialists complaint hat in the Fall of 1918, though their grain harvest was much reduced by drought, they were not permitted to thresh their own wheat with their own threshing outfit until said machinery had first been used to thresh the harvest on the Government Farm, the rule seeming to be that the Government Farm has the "right-of-way" over everything.

Your Memorialists further complain in this connection that in the Fall of 1918 the officials in charge of the Government Farm sold to one of the grazing lessees a quantity of flax straw on condition that said official should force your Memorialists to sell to the said lessee 1,000 tons of their privately owned hay at \$10 a ton, when hay was then selling on the open market at from \$15 to \$18 a ton with heavy demand. The hay permit clause in the Indian Act was invoked in order to apply the necessary pressure upon your Memorialists, who, after much protest, delivered the hay to said lessee. Your Memorialists subsequently were informed that the flax transaction netted the Government Farm about \$900, so in this single instance your Memorialists were personally mulcted in the sum of from \$5,000 to \$8,000 in order that the Government Farm might gain \$900.

Your Memorialists state that the gross mismanagement of the said Government Farm has from its inception been a disgrace to the Blood Reserve, in support of which your Memorialists, to give a single illustration, say that the wheat crop on the said Government Farm last Summer was permitted to stand unfenced from seeding time to the beginning of August, just before the harvest, during which period thousands of cattle and horses grazing upon it destroyed wheat conservatively estimated at a value of \$50,000. This amazing negligence was explained to your Memorialists by the Indian Agent as due to his inability to secure from the Commissioner the necessary authority to fence the crop, though said Commissioner was aware that the grain was standing unprotected all this time in the midst of a densely over-stocked cattle range. As a consequence, hundreds of acres of said Government Farm were unfit to cut at all, and on that portion which was harvested they managed to thresh a yield of about six bushels to the acre, as compared with between 25 and 30 bushels to the acre threshed by the lessees on the farming lease a few hundred yards away.

#### Indian Production

Your Memorialists represent that they were the first Indians in Canada to adopt the system of large scale production of grain on Indian Reserves by the use of traction engines, which they did in the year 1907 with such success that it was later extended by the Department to other Indian Reserves in the West, and the Department of Indian Affairs in its annual report for 1917 was able to make the following favorable reference to the farming enterprise of your Memorialists: "The Blood Indians during the season of 1916, by their own efforts and without any financial aid from the Government of Canada, produced 65,150 acres of wheat on 2,600 acres, and 26,980 bushels of oats on 768 acres. They grew approximately 7,150

bushels of table vegetables, harvested 6,700 tons of hay and green fodder, and prepared 2,320 acres of summer-fallow and new breaking for the next year's crop.

This, with one exception, was the largest yield of grain on any Indian Reserve in Canada, and your Memorialists maintained the same standing in 1917, for wheat, and increased their hay crop to 10,000 tons. Your Memorialists also mention that in 1917 the value of their beef production was \$60,000, being the largest of any Indian Reserve in Canada.

Your Memorialists in the development of their farming interests had provided themselves from their own funds with two large steam threshing outfits, several traction plowing outfits and one of the most extensive and complete equipments of modern farming machinery to be found anywhere in Canada, financial means for operating expenses only being needed to complete the intended extension of said farming enterprise until it covers the total farming capabilities of your Memorialists. Thus, in 1918, when the Department decided to speed up grain production on the Reserve of your Memorialists, all that was necessary so to do was for the Government to financially assist the farming development already well advanced, instead of the Government starting to farm the Reserve of your Memorialists on its own account, there being many of your Memorialists then and now anxious to be given an opportunity to farm.

#### Grazing Leases

By an amendment of the Indian Act passed in 1918, the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, when any land in a Reserve, whether held in common or by an individual, is *uncultivated*, and the Band or individual is unable or neglects to cultivate the same, may, without a surrender, grant a lease of such lands for agricultural or grazing purposes.

On February 16th, 1918, an Order-in-Council was passed appointing Mr. W. M. Graham as Indian Commissioner in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, with the following duties and powers:-

(a) To make proper arrangements with the Indians for the leasing of Reserve lands, which may be needed for grazing, for cultivation, or for other purposes, and for the compensation to be paid therefor;

(b) To formulate a policy for each Reserve;

(c) To issue directions and instructions to all inspectors, agents and employees in furtherance of that policy;

(d) To make purchases and engage or dismiss any extra or temporary employees, and market the yield of grain and live stock, and in effect to have sole management of this work subject to the approval of the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, to whom he shall report fully at close and regular intervals;

(e) To make recommendations to the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, looking to the greater efficiency of such of the Indian service in the said provinces as is not related to the said special work.

Under the powers granted by the said amendment the Indian Commissioner took possession of about 90,000 acres of your Memorialists' Reserve, composed of two

blocks of approximately equal area, one at the south-western end of said Reserve along the Belly River, and the other at the northern end of said Reserve extending from the Belly to St. Mary's River. The area so taken at the south-western end of the Reserve included the winter grazing range for your Memorialists' cattle, numbering over 3,600 head, and also included their winter watering-places, all of which were shut off from use by your Memorialists by a twelve-mile line fence.

The area at the south-western end of said Reserve was fenced off from the rest of said Reserve and some of it was rented to sheep raisers who, notwithstanding said fence, steadily pursued the practice of driving their flocks of sheep, numbering thousands, in north-easterly direction slowly across the unleased portion of the Reserve to the St. Mary's River, which being reached, such flocks would then be driven slowly back to the starting point, in consequence whereof the herbage in the line of route was eaten or destroyed, and the tract traversed became unfit for pasturing cattle, as cattle will not graze after sheep have passed over a pasture. In this manner a very large portion of the Reserve was rendered useless for your Memorialists' cattle and horses.

The area of said Reserve taken at the north end thereof was leased to sheep, cattle and horse raisers and was not fenced, and said stock-raisers allowed their cattle to feed to south of the leased territory, over your Memorialists' grazing ground, overstocking the same, whereby the fodder thereon was so depleted that there did not remain sufficient to support and feed your Memorialists' cattle and horses.

In order to provide the area which was leased for grazing as aforesaid, many of your Memorialists, who lived in the area chosen, were dispossessed of their holdings and forced to abandon their houses, and fenced pastures which had been used by them for many years, were leased to such sheep herders in addition to which hay land used by your Memorialists for over 25 years and on the product whereof your Memorialists largely depended for cattle feed and their own living, was also leased to such lessees and used by them for and as hay land. These lessees are said to have paid an annual rental of \$250 per square mile, and they have sold and hauled off the Reserve thousands of tons of hay, the product of these lands, at \$15 per ton and upwards, which should have been retained for the feeding of your Memorialists' cattle and horses.

While under the aforesaid Order-in-Council it was stated as the duty of the Commissioner "to make proper arrangements with the Indians for the leasing of the said land and for the compensation to be paid therefor," your Memorialists complain that with reference to the above mentioned grazing and hay leases of 90,000 acres, no arrangement of any sort was proposed or discussed with your Memorialists who knew nothing of any intention to place sheep on their Reserve until the sheep were actually there in thousands, and those of your Memorialists who were resident within the said area were ordered to vacate their homes in favor of the Commissioner's lessees.

When some of your Memorialists expressed their indignation at such rough dispossession, the Commissioner appeared upon the scene with three policemen and the belated information that the said leases had been granted as a war measure, and

he then had conveyed to your Memorialists' Head Chief the threat that anyone who "even objected to what was being done on the Blood Reserve, or anyone who advised anyone else to object, would be arrested and prosecuted," which threat had the effect of quieting your Memorialists until the present time. As for compensation for the lands so leased, your Memorialists have yet to learn that such is contemplated.

#### Destruction of the Indian Cattle Herd

For about fifteen years your Memorialists have managed their cattle, a herd of more than 3,600 in number, under the range herd system, holding round-ups each year for the various purposes of branding calves, dipping for mange and counting. The necessary expenses have always been paid out of your Memorialists' cattle management fund, which has hitherto been used also for the purchase of hay for feeding such cattle as might be unable to remain out on the open range all winter. Last Summer the Commissioner announced that no money would be paid from the said funds or from any other funds within his control for the purchase of hay for your Memorialists' cattle, and as this drastic ruling imperiled the very existence of said cattle herd, the Head Chief of your Memorialists telegraphed to yourself an appeal, to which he received at once the encouraging reply that the matter was being given immediate and urgent attention. Notwithstanding said assurance, your Memorialists assert that a reasonable effort was not made to provide the necessary hay, and your Memorialists' cattle went into the winter with an inadequate supply of feed, owing to the Commissioner's negative interference with the cattle business of your Memorialists as shown.

In 1919 when Spring round-up time arrived and the round-up outfit was all ready to begin the important work of calf-branding, dipping the whole herd of 3,600 for mange, as required by the regulations of the Department of Agriculture, and counting the whole herd by brands in order to make up for the Department a new official cattle record to be signed by the recently appointed Indian Agent, the Commissioner refused to permit the usual or any expenditure for said work, and gave orders to the effect that the Agent could take his office staff and other permanent help and do the round-up work on foot, which refusal of funds was maintained after it had been explained to the Commissioner that the work was technical, requiring eight or ten riders skilled in handling cattle, and each rider with at least six saddle horses. This Spring round-up work, so vital to the cattle business of your Memorialists, would not have been done at all had not a private firm of white men advanced and paid the costs.

Your Memorialists further state that in the Fall of 1919 when the proper time arrived to hold the short Fall round-up to brand with the brand of their mothers the calves, estimated to be about 300, born since the Spring round-up, or too young at that time for branding, the required authority was again withheld by the Commissioner, whose method of obstructing in this case is said to have been non-acknowledgment of official communications from the Blood Agency on the subject. While awaiting the needed sanction of the Commissioner, the branding was postponed from week to week, until winter set in and the 300 calves remained

unbranded and were lost to their Indian owners, because at the next round-up said calves being weaned will not be following their mothers, even if still on the Reserve, which is doubtful, in view of the fact that the Reserve of your Memorialists is no longer an Indian Reserve in a proper sense, but a common continually being ridden over and the stock thereon molested by numberless lessees and employees of lessees claiming the right so to do under the Commissioner's leases.

One of the lessees of your Memorialists' Reserve was permitted to remove his cattle during the recent winter without proper inspection of the brands thereon, which cattle your Memorialists are informed were taken some to the United States and some to a point on the Canadian side of the International line. From this latter herd, your Memorialists recovered and brought home 20 head of their cattle which had been wrongfully taken away from the Reserve, giving your Memorialists reasonable ground to fear that a number of their cattle were driven away with the lessee's herd which went to the United States under similar circumstances.

During the recent Winter of 1919-20, by order of the Indian Commissioner, several hundred head of your Memorialists' cattle were gathered on the Reserve, shipped from the district and sold for less than half their normal value in order to save them from starvation. As the individual brands of your Memorialists on said cattle were then indistinguishable, owing to the growth of mid-Winter hair, and could not be accurately read by anyone without clipping on each animal the area of the brand, which clipping was not done, this large shipment of cattle, said to number 600, was also lost to those of your Memorialists who were the rightful owners.

As a further consequence of the destructive conditions imposed upon your Memorialists' cattle industry as heretofore shown, a second herd of some four hundred of your Memorialists' cattle, making a total of about 1,000 head in the last two items, had to be gathered up during the recent Winter and shipped by rail to a northern Reserve to save them from starvation on your Memorialists' own Reserve, from which the Commissioner's lessees had, within twelve months, removed thousands of tons of fodder.

Your Memorialists also say that in consequence of said mismanagement, your officials are at the present time butchering for sale and for consumption on the Blood Reserve a large number of two-year-old steers, the property of your Memorialists, which are so emaciated from starvation that they weight about 350 pounds dressed, bringing to your Memorialists a gross return of only \$35 each, whereas but for the said leases, said steers could be left on the range of your Memorialists until they dressed from 800 to 1,000 pounds of prime beef, worth in excess of \$100.

Your Memorialists further complain that in September, 1918, the Commissioner had gathered up and sold a mixed lot of your Memorialists' cattle, including three-year-old steers, two-year-old steers, and young breeding cows, for which there is said to have been received the sum of \$44,000 – the steers in this shipment being sold for about \$168 each. Your Memorialists, whose private property said cattle were, have not been able to secure an accounting of said \$44,000. Your Memorialists were bluntly informed that the "Indian share" would be \$50 a head, and after a delay of about six months, credits on that basis were carried to your

Memorialists' accounts. Your Memorialists were subsequently informed that the Commissioner had other cattle purchased with a portion of said \$44,000 which cattle were, after long being fed with hay, in turn sold for about \$20 a head less than they cost in the first place, said loss from the unwarranted speculation falling upon your Memorialists.

Your Memorialists also say that in consequence of having made the above sale of cattle, including all steers, down to two-year-olds, there was no beef supply left for the ensuing winter, and that for many months the Department's officials brought in and slaughtered large numbers of your Memorialists' young cows in calf, throwing out the unborn calves with the offal, to the serious loss and astonishment of your Memorialists who had heard so much of the importance of food production.

In the annual report of the Department of Indian Affairs for 1917, it was stated: "The largest herds are held by the Blood Indians, who own upwards of 4,000 head of the finest beef cattle in the West." Your Memorialists believe that in consequence of the gross mismanagement of and senseless interference with the cattle industry of your Memorialists during the last two years, the above statement of the Department could no longer be made, even were the figure cut in half. About the 10th of this month some of your Memorialists read in the public press an announcement by the Indian Commissioner that last Winter's cattle losses of your Memorialists were but 5% or 6% whereas, at the date of said announcement, there were hundreds of your Memorialists' cattle lying dead of starvation at the Blood Reserve, which carcasses your Memorialists were forbidden to skin, though the hides are in active demand at good prices. Young men of your Memorialists offered to remove these hundreds of hides from the carcasses at fifty cents each, and turn the hides over to the Government for sale, but were forbidden. If this ruling was not made for the purpose of suppressing the real losses of your Memorialists' cattle, your Memorialists would like to know what was the reason for wasting so many valuable hides.

#### Destruction of Indian Horses

Your Memorialists state that throughout the forty years of their occupation of the Blood Reserve their horses of all classes were wintered by grazing on the open range, no horses being stabled except when in use. During this Winter of 1919-20, the horses of your Memorialists died of starvation in such numbers that by Spring no less than 538 fatalities had been reported for record. A most deplorable feature of this calamity lies in the fact that the work horses of your Memorialists were heaviest sufferers, a total of 454 work horses being reported dead of starvation up to 12th inst. When the new grass was just beginning to grow. Some of your Memorialists who are farmers have lost all of their teams, while many of your Memorialists have nothing left with which to either ride, drive or work, and are thus obliged for the first time in their lives to travel long distances on foot.

Your Memorialists are mindful that the district in which their Reserve is situated was subject to a drought in 1919 with shortage of grass imposing unusual hardship upon live stock owners generally, but this does not affect that fact that in

their case your Memorialists had on their Reserve in their Winter range and elsewhere an amount of grazing amply sufficient to have carried their cattle and horses through to the present time had they not been dispossessed of it as described, in order that the live stock of white men might be saved while that of the Indians died.

Your Memorialists complain that under the new system of administration to which they herein object, the peace of your Memorialists' Reserve has been seriously threatened by the practice of white men carrying firearms on said Reserve for the intimidation of your Memorialists, in support of which they state that an agent carried a revolver, an engineer went armed with an automatic pistol, a lessees' rider pointed a revolver in the face of one of your Memorialists merely because he was hunting horses on the central unleased portion of the Reserve, and a sheep herder is reported to have fired several shots with a rifle at one of your Memorialists who was driving the sheep out of his own pasture field.

Your Memorialists represent that whereas under the Treaty of the 22nd day of September, 1877, they are entitled to two Head Chiefs, and fifteen Councillors, vacancies therein caused by death have not been filled for many years, and at present there is only one Chief and the councillors number eight only, much to the detriment of the affairs of your Memorialists, who are thus deprived of the necessary official leadership provided for them by Treaty.

Your Memorialists contend that the amendment of 1918 to Section 90 of the Indian Act, which empowers government officials to peremptorily dispossess Indians of their pasture fields, their hay lands, and their homes, and by means of private leases to hand all of these over to white men, to be used for exactly the same purposes as the dispossessed Indians were using them, is morally unsound and a breach of the Treaty of 1877, which provided your Memorialists with a Reserve for their exclusive use until voluntarily surrendered, which was not only the understanding of the parties thereto when the Treaty was signed, but was so interpreted and honored by every Government of Canada for forty years thereafter.

Your Memorialists desire to add that in the foregoing there is no intended suggestion of the personal dishonesty of any Government official, the whole effort of your Memorialists herein being directed against the policy and methods of administration under which your Memorialists are rapidly becoming paupers.

Your Memorialists therefore pray,

(1) That all grazing leases covering portions of your Memorialists' Reserve granted since the 16th day of February, 1918, be forthwith cancelled.

(2) That the regulations relating to the impounding of trespassing live stock may be enforced as formerly.

(3) That the surrender of the 30th day of May, 1918, be declared null and void and not binding upon your Memorialists, and that the surrender of the 23rd day of March, 1918, be declared valid.

(4) That the Government Farm on your Memorialists' Reserve be divided up amongst Indians belonging to your Memorialists who desire to farm, and that your Memorialists be assisted both financially and by the appointment of Farm Instructors

to extend to the utmost, as they earnestly desire to do, their system of farming said Reserve.

(5) That the individual owners of hay who were compelled to sell their hay in the Fall and Winter of 1918 to grazing lessees at from \$5 to \$8 per ton below the market price, be partially recompensed for their loss at the rate of \$5 per ton.

(6) That a count of your Memorialists' cattle be made in July of this year, and that losses sustained by individual cattle owners as ascertained by a comparison of the results of such counting with the count made at the round-up of 1919, be made up to them in cattle.

(7) That the losses sustained by your Memorialists by reason of the starvation and death of horses, be made up to the individual losers by replacing the dead work horses and compensating them in money for other horses which died owing to the causes alleged in the Memorial.

(8) That an accounting be ordered as to the disposition of the \$44,000 mentioned in the 37th paragraph of this Memorial, or of such sum as may have been realized from the sale mentioned in said paragraph.

(9) That your Memorialists and their affairs may be entirely removed from the jurisdiction of the Regina Office, under which they have in two years been almost ruined, and that the control of their affairs be returned to the Ottawa Office, which directed the Blood Agency up to 1918, and under which all their progress was made.

(10) That an election to fill the vacancies in the offices of Chief and Councillors of your Memorialists' Band be directed to be held forthwith.

(11) That steps be taken to procure the repeal by Parliament of the amendment to Section 90 of the Indian Act, passed in 1918, since the necessity for the exercise of the powers thereby conferred does not exist, and because the exercise of such powers has been detrimental to the best interests of your Memorialists.

Or alternatively,

(12) Your Memorialists pray that a full and complete judicial investigation of the administration of your Memorialists' Reserve since the 31st day of December, 1917, and especially of the grievances herein set forth, be ordered to be held, and that for such a purpose a commission issue to the District Judge of the District of Macleod under the Inquiries Act, Chapter 104, of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1906.

And your Memorialists will ever pray,

Signed at Ottawa, May 31st, 1920.

(Signed) SHOT-ON-BOTH-SIDES<sup>17</sup>,

Head Chief of the Blood Indians.

Per his Attorney,

R. N. WILSON.

And on behalf of your Memorialists,

(Signed) R. V. SINCLAIR, K.C.,

Their Solicitor.

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<sup>17</sup> Chief Shot-on-both-sides died in 1956.

WE, the undersigned Blood Indians, hereby give our support to the Memorial of May 31st, 1920, presented upon our behalf to the Government by R. N. Wilson and to such other measures as he may decide to take in that connection:

- |                                    |                              |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Shot-on-Both-Sides, Head Chief. | 36. White Man                |
| 2. Young Pine, Minor Chief.        | 37. Henry Black Water        |
| 3. One Spot, Minor Chief.          | 38. Yellow Feet              |
| 4. Many White Horses, Minor Chief. | 39. Fred Tail Feathers       |
| 5. Weasel Fat, Minor Chief.        | 40. Striped Wolf             |
| 6. Running Wolf, Minor Chief.      | 41. Mike Oka                 |
| 7. Running Antelope, Minor Chief.  | 42. Many Bears               |
| 8. Heavy Shield, Minor Chief.      | 43. Goose Chief              |
| 9. Left Hand, Minor Chief.         | 44. Tall Man                 |
| 10. Eagle Plume                    | 45. Frank Good Striker       |
| 11. Heavy Head                     | 46. Good Striker             |
| 12. Riding in the Door             | 47. Albert Chief Calf        |
| 13. Mike Snake Eater               | 48. Ghost Chest              |
| 14. Rough Hair                     | 49. First Charger            |
| 15. Morning Owl                    | 50. Bruised Head             |
| 16. Owns Different Horses          | 51. Tom Many Feathers        |
| 17. Black Forehead (Younger)       | 52. White Wolf               |
| 18. Joe Aberdeen                   | 53. Fred Spotted Bull        |
| 19. Stephen S. Fox                 | 54. Louis Owl Boy            |
| 20. Chas. Goodrider                | 55. John Red Crane           |
| 21. Tom Morning Owl                | 56. Medicine Crane           |
| 22. Tom Russell                    | 57. Hairy Bull               |
| 23. Maurice Many Fingers           | 58. Jack Eagle Bear          |
| 24. Gros Ventre Boy                | 59. Many Mules               |
| 25. Howard Hind Man                | 60. Julius Iron Horn         |
| 26. Mike Blood                     | 61. Jim Healy                |
| 27. Aloysius Crop Ear Wolf         | 62. Bert Medicine Crane      |
| 28. Sinew Feet                     | 63. Brown Chief Calf         |
| 29. Holy Singer                    | 64. White Man Running Around |
| 30. Geo. Big Wolf                  | 65. Joe Eagle Rib            |
| 31. Walter Singer                  | 66. Heavy Runner             |
| 32. Johnny Pace                    | 67. Paul McDonald            |
| 33. Round Nose                     | 68. Black Forehead (Elder)   |
| 34. Soup                           | 69. Joe Gambler              |
| 35. Willie Red Crow                | 70. Musk Rat                 |
|                                    | 71. Jimmy Knife              |

- |      |                           |      |                        |
|------|---------------------------|------|------------------------|
| 72.  | Big Swallow               | 116. | Ronald Hoof            |
| 73.  | Crazy Cow                 | 117. | Hind Bull              |
| 74.  | Melting Tallow            | 118. | Joe Beebe              |
| 75.  | Sun Dance                 | 119. | Chief Owl              |
| 76.  | George Long Time Squirrel | 120. | Chris Bull Shields     |
| 77.  | Eagle Child               | 121. | Emile Small Face       |
| 78.  | Green Grass Bull          | 122. | Ben Strangling Wolfe   |
| 79.  | Black Rabbit              | 123. | Donald Gomoose         |
| 80.  | Bob Tall Chief            | 124. | Hungry Crow            |
| 81.  | Big Wolf                  | 125. | The Gambler            |
| 82.  | James Wells               | 126. | Long-Time Squirrel     |
| 83.  | Robert Shore              | 127. | Calf Robe              |
| 84.  | Cross Child               | 128. | Wolf Child             |
| 85.  | Plain Woman               | 129. | Calling High           |
| 86.  | Yellow Shine              | 130. | Blue Wings             |
| 87.  | Takes the Gun Strong      | 131. | Joe Heavy Head         |
| 88.  | White Man Left            | 132. | Little Shine           |
| 89.  | Percy Creighton           | 133. | Day Rider              |
| 90.  | Jack Low Horn             | 134. | Johnny Healy           |
| 91.  | George Vielle             | 135. | George Strangling Wolf |
| 92.  | Big Calf                  | 136. | Joe Healy              |
| 93.  | Felix Stevens             | 137. | Wm. Heavy Runner       |
| 94.  | Weasel Tail               | 138. | Percy White Bull       |
| 95.  | Black White Man           | 139. | Jim White Bull         |
| 96.  | Black Eagle               | 140. | Ronald Day Chief       |
| 97.  | Black Plume               | 141. | Eagle Speaker          |
| 98.  | Chief Mountain            | 142. | Jim Russell            |
| 99.  | Weasel White Buffalo      | 143. | Knife                  |
| 100. | Chief in Timber           | 144. | Lawrie Plume           |
| 101. | Bob Riding Black Horses   | 145. | Paul Russell           |
| 102. | Tom Eagle Child           | 146. | Medicine Singer        |
| 103. | Iron Shirt                | 147. | Stephen Oka            |
| 104. | Harry Mills               | 148. | Dick Standing Alone    |
| 105. | Joe Chief Body            | 149. | Nick White Calf        |
| 106. | Calling First             | 150. | Charlie Wolf Robe      |
| 107. | Crane Chief               | 151. | Old Shoe               |
| 108. | Steel                     | 152. | Bumble Bee             |
| 109. | Bear Shin Bone            | 153. | Plume                  |
| 110. | Henry Big Head            | 154. | Black Horses           |
| 111. | Charles Blood             | 155. | White Feather          |
| 112. | Scraping White            | 156. | Geo. Prairie Chicken   |
| 113. | Pete                      | 157. | J. Crow Chief          |
| 114. | White Calf Chief          | 158. | Willows                |
| 115. | Chas. Davis               | 159. | Nick King              |

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|------|-----------------------|------|------------------------------|
| 160. | Alfred Wolf Robe      | 181. | Shot Close                   |
| 161. | Three Guns            | 182. | Alex Little Shield           |
| 162. | Joe Eli               | 183. | John Spotted Eagle           |
| 163. | Ronald Gets Wood      | 184. | Mike Mountain Horse          |
| 164. | Tallow                | 185. | Big Boy                      |
| 165. | Cecil Tallow          | 186. | John Day Chief               |
| 166. | Gets Wood at Night    | 187. | Bottle                       |
| 167. | Willie Scraping White | 188. | Young Bottle                 |
| 168. | Morning Bird          | 189. | Feather on the Head          |
| 169. | Rabbit                | 190. | Wolf Sitting                 |
| 170. | Mike Yellow Bull      | 191. | George Dog Child             |
| 171. | John Cotton           | 192. | Mortimer Eagle Tail Feathers |
| 172. | Bob Plaited Hair      | 193. | Percy Plainwoman             |
| 173. | W. Wadsworth          | 194. | Jim White Man Left           |
| 174. | Jack Hind Bull        | 195. | James Takes the Gun Strong   |
| 175. | Weasel Shoe           | 196. | Sam Hairy Bull               |
| 176. | Jim Spear Chief       | 197. | Jimmy White Man              |
| 177. | Remi Undermouse       | 198. | Paul Melting Tallow          |
| 178. | Falling Over a Bank   | 199. | John Many Chief              |
| 179. | Leonard Sweet Grass   | 200. | Big Nose                     |
| 180. | Running Coyote        |      |                              |

## APPENDIX

Correspondence regarding leases on the Blood Reserve<sup>18</sup>

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J.A.J. McKenna<sup>19</sup> to Clifford Sifton, January 5, 1904 (I)

Referring to our conversations respecting the McEwen and Company's lease of the grassing privileges on the Blood Reserve, I beg to set forth what was disclosed in respect thereto when I met the Indians and discussed with them the proposal to lease to Mr. Wolfe and others, of Cardston, a portion of the reserve for agricultural purposes. One speaker in voicing the objection of the Indians to the alienation of any portion of the reserve, complained of being annoyed by white men seeking to secure possession or the use of the land. I told him that no white man had any right to go upon the reserve and urge the Indians to part with any of their land, and that in the event of their being so troubled in the future, they should report to the Agent, who would take the proper action.

This pleased the Indians, but the new Agent, Mr. R. N. Wilson, being desirous of knowing what had given rise to the complaint asked the Indians if they had any particular case in mind. The answer was the grazing lease. I then said that I understood that the Indians had consented to the lease, and that of course under it the lessees had the right to put cattle on the reserve. The Indians at once made the argument that as the lease provided that it would go into immediate effect upon execution, it was now null and void, because the lessees had not begun operations under it. I endeavoured to reason with them, but found a very general and strong feeling against the arrangement. I was to leave the reserve that day, but the new Agent feared that trouble might be occasioned [for] him in connection with the lease, and at his request I remained over to give the Indians on the following day an opportunity of stating their position.

The next day accordingly there was a much larger gathering of Indians. One of the head chiefs was present, but "Crop Eared Wolf" did not appear. Man after man arose and objected to the lease, on the ground that it had been given by the chiefs without their consent, and that as every member of the band had an equal interest in the land and the grazing, a general consent should have been obtained. It was urged in extenuation by the second chiefs who spoke that they consented to the lease because they were under the impression that Mr. T. P. Wadsworth, who accompanied Mr. McEwen, was an officer of the Government and that he was representing the Government in securing the lease.

Day Chief, when all had finished, confined himself to saying that if there was anything crooked about the lease he desired it cancelled. I asked him what he meant by "crooked." He answered that if Mr. Wadsworth did not represent the Government the Chiefs were misled. I pressed him further, and he said that "Crop Eared Wolf"

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<sup>18</sup> From Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 3571, File 130, Pt. 19). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>19</sup> James Andrew Joseph McKenna (1862 – 1919), then Assistant Indian Commissioner.

secured his consent by telling him that he had an assurance that if the lease were granted the two head chiefs, one second chief and an interpreter would have a free trip to Ottawa. He asked that I investigate the matter, and expressed his readiness to leave it entirely in my hands.

While I was making a general address to the Indians Day Chief asked to be allowed to speak again. He then said that he had forgotten to tell me there had been a promise of a money payment to the chiefs over and above the consideration stipulated in the lease. He said that "Crop Eared Wolf" told him that the chiefs were to receive money in addition to the trip to Ottawa; but he added that up to the present he had not received any.

On the subject of the lease I confined myself to saying that I would report to you what had been said to me.

I may add that I have reason to believe that after it was decided that the lease was to be allowed, money was transmitted to McLeod and passed to "Crop Eared Wolf."

J.A.J. McKenna to Clifford Sifton, January 5, 1904 (II)

I visited the Blood reserve and took up with the Indians the proposal of the Messrs. Wolfe, Wolfe, Hammer and others to lease a portion of the reserve for agricultural purposes. The land applied for is a portion of a reserve containing 3000 acres cut off by a proposed line of railway for which a right of way has been provided.

I found the Indians absolutely opposed to the alienation in any way of any portion of the reserve. I pointed out to them that it was not a proposal to convey any portion of the reserve, but merely to reserve the part referred to at a rental for, say, ten or twenty years; that at the end of such period the land improved by the leaseholders would be theirs to make use of as they pleased, and that in the meantime they would have, by way of rental, a revenue that I did not think could otherwise be derived from the land. I went so far as to say that while the proposal was to pay a rental of 35¢ an acre I thought that, on the principle of a twenty-years' purchase at \$10 an acre, they might get 50¢ an acre rental per annum. But they would not at all entertain the proposal.

They gave as a reason that they cut hay upon that portion of the reserve; but apart from that it was quite evident that they have definitely made up their mind not to part, even by way of lease, with the use of any portion of the reserve. The Blood Indians are extremely sensitive upon this point.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,—

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) J. A. J. McKenna

Asst. Indian Commissioner.

R. N. Wilson to J.A.J. McKenna, March 25, 1904

A few days ago I received a visit from Mr. Tom Brown, the manager of Donald McEwen & Company, who informed me that their cattle will begin to arrive here on the 5th April.

The Indians have since their conference with you been under the impression that the lease was off and every week they have been enquiring for an official announcement to that effect.

No word from yourself or the Department on the subject creates an awkward situation for me to occupy on the arrival of the McEwen cattle, for you assured the Indians that White man's cattle could not graze on the reserve without their consent, and then you took a poll of the tribe with the result that there was an almost unanimous refusal of consent. You may remember telling them that all they had to do was to report strange cattle to the agent, who would have them put off. The situation is complicated by the fact that the best of the self-supporting squad are bitterly opposed to the lease.

John D. McLean<sup>20</sup> to J. A. J. McKenna, July 18, 1904

I am directed to inform you that the Donald McEwen Company have assigned to the Department their interest in the 3,000 acres cut off from the Blood Reserve by the St. Mary's River Railway. It is intended that this land be used for grazing purposes by the settlers of the Cardston district; and I am to request that you will go there, see the people of the district, and ascertain what arrangements can best be made in the public interest that will meet the views of the settlers as to the granting of grazing privileges on the land referred to.

I may add that it is desired that the settlers generally shall benefit by the arrangement, and that the privileges arising therefrom be not monopolized by a few.

J. A. J. McKenna to John D. McLean, July 22, 1904

I shall take the earliest opportunity of visiting Cardston, but in the meantime I should be pleased to be advised as to whether the Department is free to grant grazing privileges on the said 3000 acres without the concurrence of the Indians. The McEwen lease consists in a memorandum of agreement between certain representatives of the Blood Indians and Donald McEwen, and provides *inter alia* that the party of the second part shall not sub-let without the authority of the Superintendent General. I gather from your letter that the intention is not that the party of the second part should sub-let to the settlers, but that grazing permits should be issued by the Agent on terms and conditions to be arranged. It is important that I should be clearly advised as to whether the Department is in a position to carry out any arrangement which may be effected with the settlers without further reference to the Indians, or whether such arrangement is to be subject to the consent of the Indians.

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<sup>20</sup> John Duncan McLean (1873 – 1948) was then Secretary of the Department of Indian Affairs.

Frank Pedley<sup>21</sup> to J. A. J. McKenna, July 27, 1904

Regarding the granting of Grazing privileges on the 3000 acres of the Blood Reserve cut off by the Railway, I beg to state that it is considered that the Department has the right to issue Grazing Permits on the said land without the concurrence of the Indians.

Messrs. Donald McEwen & Co., have assigned to the Department all rights granted them covering the 3000 acres in question, which rights being held by the Department may be granted on such terms and conditions as may be considered advisable.

J. A. J. McKenna to John D. McLean, September 7, 1904

On Thursday and Friday last I had interviews with settlers at Cardston, and I drove over and examined the 3000 acres of land cut off by the railway, which according to your letter it was desired should be made available for grazing purposes for the settlers under an arrangement that would be best in the public interest and would meet the views of the settlers.

I found that the settlers would not be satisfied with such privileges of grazing on this land as were held by the McEwen Co. on the Reserve. The tract is so situated as to make it quite apparent that an open lease would really be of no appreciable benefit to the settlers, indeed would put them in no better position than they are at present. Nothing but a closed lease would do, that is, a lease excluding Indians as well as others from making use of the land.

The Indians are in the habit of frequently visiting Cardston and using the tract as a camping ground. On account of the railway fence their horses can grass there without fear of their straying back to their locations on the Reserve. It is obviously detrimental to the interests of the Indians to have them camping near Cardston. The sale of liquor is prohibited in Cardston under local option, and while I have no reason to doubt the statements made to me that no liquor is sold to the Indians from the two hotels in the Town, I fear that unprincipled dealers and half-breed visitors from across the line use themselves as instruments for supplying Indians liquor at a great profit to themselves and a great loss to the Indians.

I assume, of course, that the Department would not entertain a proposal to issue closed leases to the settlers without the consent of the Indians. If that were done the Indians, to emphasize their opposition, would make larger and more frequent use of the tract, and we would have to call upon the Police to protect the lessees. The settlers see this themselves clearly. But I say this without any intention of conveying the impression that it would not be a difficult and delicate matter to secure the consent of the Indians to the sale of the land, although I am quite satisfied that it would be in their best interests to dispose of it.

It occurred to me that the best plan of disposal would be to have the tract subdivided into 40-acre plots, such plot to be divided into plots of 10 acres, and the 10-acre plots put up at public auction. In this way a high price would be obtained for

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<sup>21</sup> Frank Pedley (1885 – 1920) was then Deputy Superintendent General of the Department of Indian Affairs.

the lots adjoining the town, and there would be secured a good average price for the whole tract, notwithstanding the fact that a considerable portion of it is very poor land. I discussed this idea with the settlers and they were quite taken with it, but I made it clear that it would require considerable slow and careful discussion with the Indians through official channels to secure the consent. They concluded that in the hope of having the land released for sale it would be wiser for them to abandon the idea of grazing leases and not to press for immediate action.

If the suggestion that I make is approved of, I will communicate with the Agent and authorize him to take occasion to explain the matter to the Indians before a formal submission of the question is made. If the question were submitted now it would not be entertained.

## APPENDIX

Reports on the Blood Reserve by R. N. Wilson, Indian Agent<sup>22</sup>

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September 18, 1905

Sir, – I have the honour to submit the annual report of this agency for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1905, together with the usual statement of agricultural and industrial statistics and inventory of government property.

Reserve. – The Blood reserve is situated between the Belly and St. Mary rivers, and from the forks of these streams runs in a southern direction for about forty miles to within fourteen miles of the international boundary. It contains an area of over 540 square miles or some 354,000 acres of splendid grazing land. The two rivers form the boundary lines on the north, east and west sides and furnish an abundant supply of fresh clear water. The south boundary is fenced with a line of barbed wire fifteen miles long. There is no building timber upon the reserve, but the river bottoms in places have cotton-wood trees and a fair growth of willow, which form good cattle shelters during the cold weather. It is the largest Indian reserve in the Dominion.

Tribe. – The Blood Indians are the principal branch of the Blackfoot nation or family in the great Algonkian linguistic stock. The Blackfoot nation consists of the Blood, Blackfoot and Peigan tribes, located in Alberta, and a subdivision of the latter tribe known as the South Peigans, who are United States Indians located in Montana immediately south of the line. These three tribes, with their allies, the Gros Ventres and the Sarcees, form the Blackfoot confederacy, a powerful combination which for a century held by force of arms against all comers an extensive territory reaching from the Missouri river north to the Red Deer and from the Rockies east to beyond the Cypress hills. The protection of their vast territory against invasion imposed upon these Indians a life of almost constant warfare with the numerous enemies which surrounded them on all sides, and developed in the people a proud and imperious spirit which after twenty-five years of reservation life is still the prominent characteristic of the Bloods.

Population. – The population of the reserve at the annuity payments in November last was 1,204.

Health and Sanitation. – There have been no epidemics during the year, and it may be said that the general health of the Indians has been satisfactory. The Rev. Sisters in charge of the hospital attached to the Roman Catholic mission have done good work in nursing the sick patients under their charge, about two hundred and seventy-five patients having been admitted to that institution during the year.

Owing to our short and mild winter, compared with that of other parts of the country, these people are enabled to live an open-air life in tents for the greater portion of the year, which is very beneficial to their health. They are continually

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<sup>22</sup> From the *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs*, 1905 – 1911.

instructed to keep their surroundings clean and to burn up all refuse. Though there is a tendency on the part of the majority to neglect, while in winter quarters in their houses, such important considerations as ventilation, light and cleanliness, our efforts to improve these conditions are not without encouraging results.

Occupations. – The care and management of cattle and haymaking are the principal occupations, although the Indians earn considerable by freighting coal and other supplies for the agency, the R.N.W.M.P. and neighbouring ranchers. Over four thousand tons of hay were put up by the Bloods last season for their own use and for sale, which alone represents a vast amount of labour. They supplied to the department over \$11,000 worth of beef, and their total earnings for the year amounted to more than \$40,000, most of which is represented by transactions originating at or passing through the agency office.

Stock. – It has long been recognized that in connection with the cattle industry lies a great hope for the future of these Indians. The grazing capabilities of their magnificent reservation and the natural interest of the Indians in live stock encourage the belief that in the ownership of large herds of cattle will be found a solution to most of the problems with which we are now confronted in connection with their management. To this end the department has for some years furnished annually a number of heifers to be issued to the Indians in a special effort to make cattle-owners of such members of the tribe as can with safety be entrusted with the care of horned stock. While this branch of our work is no more than half done, we have a creditable showing for the expenditure incurred to date. This spring we have branded 1,049 calves, bringing our total to more than 6,000 head of cattle. While striving to increase the number as rapidly as possible, careful attention has been paid to the matter of quality, as is evidenced by the fact that we maintain a herd of 135 thoroughbred bulls. These are Shorthorns, Herefords and Galloways, most of which were imported from Manitoba and Ontario, but our best and cheapest bulls are those purchased by the department during the last two years at the annual public auction of thoroughbred cattle held at Calgary, under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture.

Eleven stallion supplied by the department are kept on the reserve for the improvement of the Indian horses.

Buildings and Implements. – While an improvement in the dwelling-houses of the Indians is apparent, the high price of lumber in this district makes progress in that direction slow.

Nearly all of the frame buildings of the agency have been painted white, with roofs of mineral red, adding much to the appearance of the place.

A substantial addition of two rooms was made to the clerk's house during the year, which, with repairs and minor improvements, makes that official's quarters very comfortable.

About 700 acres of additional land for gardens and grain fields have been fenced by the Indians this year. The fencing in of large tracts by individual Indians for pasturage is discouraged as having a tendency to destroy the grazing value of the

reservation, but the breaking and fencing of land for agricultural purposes is encouraged and assisted in every way.

To their already large working equipment the Indians added during the year, thirty-six sets of harness, thirteen wagons, eight mowers, nine rakes, seven ploughs and fifteen saddles.

Education. – Two boarding schools are supported by the department in connection with this agency, one under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church and the other of the Church of England, with an aggregate attendance of seventy pupils. From these schools and from the reserve direct are obtained recruits for the industrial schools at Calgary and High River, which contain at present thirty-six pupils from this reservation.

Temperance and Morality. – The greatest evil we have to contend with in this connection is the illegal traffic in liquor to Indians, which in late years has grown to such an extent as to become a very serious matter. Special measures have been of late adopted by the department with a view to checking this disgraceful traffic, including the employment of two Indian constables under the agent's control and a provision to reward the informers in cases where convicted persons serve imprisonment in default of a fine, thus correcting a weakness found in the operation of the Indian Act, which makes the reward dependent upon payment of the fine. These changes have been so beneficial that in three months no less than seventeen persons have been convicted for supplying intoxicants to Indians of the reserve.

The complete stamping out of this liquor evil will no doubt be a very difficult, if not impossible, matter, but we have every reason to believe that the permanent adoption of the methods now in use will make the illicit dealers' occupation a much more dangerous one and drunken Indians much less common than has been the case for some years past. In fact a marked improvement has already been noticed.

Much depends upon the attitude of magistrates towards this offence. Some of them do not seem to realize the seriousness of it, judging from the proportions of minimum sentences imposed.

Progress. – In the direction of self-support a substantial beginning has been made. A considerable number of the Indians have ceased to draw free beef rations from the department, but consume beef entirely of their own raising, while others with smaller herds contribute in part to their support. Owing to this self-sustenance a reduction of 120,000 pounds of beef was effected in free food issues during the past year.

I have, &c.,

R. N. WILSON,

*Indian Agent.*

July 10, 1906<sup>23</sup>

Sir, – I have the honour to submit the annual report of this agency for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1906, together with the usual statement of agricultural and industrial statistics and inventory of government property.

Reserve. – The Blood reserve is situated between the Belly and St. Mary rivers, and from the forks of these streams runs in a southern direction for about 40 miles to within 14 miles of the international boundary. It contains an area of over 540 square miles or some 354,000 acres of splendid grazing land. The two rivers form the boundary lines on the north, east and west sides and furnish an abundant supply of fresh, clear water. The south boundary is fenced with a line of barbed-wire fencing 15 miles long. There is no building timber upon the reserve, but the river bottoms in places have cotton-wood trees and a fair growth of willow, which form good cattle shelters during the cold weather. It is the largest Indian reservation in the Dominion.

Tribe. – The Blood Indians are the principal branch of the Blackfoot nation or family in the great Algonkian linguistic stock. The Blackfoot nation consists of the Blood, Blackfoot and Peigan tribes, located in Alberta, and a subdivision of the latter tribe known as the South Peigans, who are United States Indians located in Montana immediately south of the line. These three tribes, with their allies, the Gros Ventres and the Sarcees, form the Blackfoot confederacy, a powerful combination which for a century held by force of arms against all comers an extensive territory reaching from the Missouri river north to the Red Deer and from the Rockies east to beyond the Cypress hills. The protection of their vast territory against invasion imposed upon these Indians a life of almost constant warfare with the numerous enemies which surrounded them on all sides, and developed in the people a proud and imperious spirit which after twenty-five years of reservation life is still the prominent characteristic of the Bloods.

Population. – The population of the reserve at the annuity payments in November last was 1,181.

Health and Sanitation. – There have been no epidemics during the year, and it may be said that the general health of the Indians has been satisfactory. The Rev. Sisters in charge of the hospital attached to the Roman Catholic mission have done good work in nursing the sick patients under their charge.

Owing to our short and mild winter, compared with that of other parts of the country, these people are enabled to live an open-air life in tents for the greater portion of the year, which is very beneficial to their health. They are continually instructed to keep their surroundings clean and to burn up all refuse. Though there is a tendency on the part of the majority to neglect, while in winter quarters in their houses, such important considerations as ventilation, light and cleanliness, our efforts to improve these conditions are not without encouraging results.

Resources and Occupations. – The care and management of cattle and haymaking are the principal occupations, though the Indians earn considerable by freighting coal and other supplies for the agency, the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, and neighbouring ranchers. Over 3,000 tons of hay were put up by the Bloods

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<sup>23</sup> Much of this is repeated *verbatim* from the previous year's report.

last season for their own use and for sale, which alone represents a vast amount of labour. They supplied to the department over \$9,710 worth of beef, and their total earnings for the year amounted to more than \$41,000, most of which is represented by transactions originating at or passing through the agency office.

Stock. – It has long been recognized that in connection with the cattle industry lies a great hope for the future of these Indians. The grazing capabilities of their magnificent reservation and the natural interest of the Indians in live stock encourage the belief that in the ownership of large herds of cattle will be found a solution to most of the problems with which we are now confronted in connection with their management. To this end the department has for some years furnished annually a number of heifers to be issued to the Indians in a special effort to make cattle-owners of such members of the tribe as can with safety be entrusted with the care of horned stock. While this branch of our work is not yet complete, we have a creditable showing for the expenditure incurred. This spring we have already branded over 1,300 calves, bringing the total up to more than 7,500 head of cattle owned by the Blood Indians, and the season's branding is still in progress. While striving to increase the number as rapidly as possible, careful attention has been paid to the matter of quality as is evidenced by the fact that we maintain a herd of 155 thoroughbred bulls. These are Shorthorns, Herefords and Galloways, many of which were imported from Manitoba and Ontario; but our best and cheapest bulls are those purchased by the department during the last three years at the annual public auction of thoroughbred cattle held at Calgary under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture.

Eleven stallions supplied by the department are kept on the reserve for the improvement of the Indian horses.

Buildings and Implements. – While an improvement in the dwelling-houses of the Indians is apparent, the high price of lumber in this district makes progress in that direction slow.

A few acres of additional land for gardens have been fenced by the Indians this year. The fencing in of large tracts by individual Indians for pasturage is discouraged as having a tendency to destroy the grazing value of the reservation, but the breaking and fencing of land for agricultural purposes is encouraged and assisted in every way.

To their already large working equipment the Indians added during the year, 30 wagons, 1 plough, 6 mowers, 4 rakes, 20 sets of harness and a large number of saddles.

Education and Religion. – Two boarding schools are supported by the department in connection with this agency, one under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church and the other of the Church of England, with an aggregate attendance of 70 pupils. From these schools and from the reserve direct are obtained recruits for the industrial schools at Calgary and High River, which contain at present 37 pupils from this reservation.

Temperance and Morality. – The greatest evil we have to contend with in this connection is the illegal traffic in liquor to Indians, which in late years has grown to such an extent as to become a very serious matter. Special measures have been of

late adopted by the department with a view to checking this disgraceful traffic, including the employment of two Indian constables under the agent's control and a provision to reward the informers in cases where convicted persons serve imprisonment in default of a fine, thus correcting a weakness found in the operation of the Indian Act, which makes the reward dependent upon payment of the fine. These changes have been so beneficial that in three months no less than seventeen persons have been convicted for supplying intoxicants to Indians of the reserve.

The complete stamping out of this liquor evil will no doubt be a very difficult, if not impossible, matter, but we have every reason to believe that the permanent adoption of the methods now in use will make the illicit dealers' occupation a much more dangerous one and drunken Indians much less common than has been the case for some years past. In fact a marked improvement has already been noticed.

Much depends upon the attitude of magistrates towards this offence. Some of them do not seem to realize the seriousness of it, judging from the proportions of minimum sentences imposed.

Progress. – In the direction of self-support a substantial beginning has been made. A considerable number of the Indians have ceased to draw free beef rations from the department, but consume beef entirely of their own raising; while others with smaller herds contribute in part to their support. Owing to this self-sustenance a reduction of 196,000 pounds of beef was effected in the free food issues during the last two years.

I have, &c.,

R. N. WILSON,

*Indian Agent.*

May 27, 1907

Sir, – I have the honour to submit the annual report of this agency for the fiscal year (of nine months) ended March 31, 1907, together with the usual statement of agricultural and industrial statistics and inventory of government property.

Reserve. – The Blood reserve is situated between the Belly and St. Mary rivers, and from the forks of these streams runs in a southern direction for about 40 miles to within 14 miles of the international boundary. It contains an area of over 540 square miles or some 354,000 acres of splendid grazing land. The two rivers form the boundary lines on the north, east and west sides and furnish an abundant supply of fresh, clear water. The south boundary is fenced with a line of barbed wire fencing 15 miles long. There is no building timber upon the reserve, but the river bottoms in places have cotton-wood trees and a fair growth of willow, which form good cattle shelters during the cold weather. It is the largest Indian reservation in the Dominion.

Tribe. – The Blood Indians are the principal branch of the Blackfoot nation or family in the great Algonkian linguistic stock. The Blackfoot nation consists of the Blood, Blackfoot and Peigan tribes, located in Alberta, and a subdivision of the latter tribe known as the South Peigans, who are United States Indians located in Montana immediately south of the line. These three tribes, with their allies, the Gros Ventres and the Sarcees, form the Blackfoot confederacy, a powerful combination which for a

century held by force of arms against all comers an extensive territory reaching from the Missouri river north to the Red Deer and from the Rockies east to beyond the Cypress hills. The protection of their vast territory against invasion imposed upon these Indians a life of almost constant warfare with the numerous enemies which surrounded them on all sides, and developed in the people a proud and imperious spirit which after twenty-five years of reservation life is still the prominent characteristic of the Bloods.

Population. – The population of the reserve at the annuity payments last December was 1,168.

Health and Sanitation. – There have been no epidemics during the year. One case of small-pox was reported, the patient being a child, who recovered. The affected house was duly quarantined, and no further cases developed. The Rev. Sisters in charge of the hospital on the reserve have continued their good work in attending the patients under their care.

Resources and Occupations. – The care and management of cattle and haymaking are the principal occupations, though the Indians earn considerable by freighting coal and other supplies for the agency, the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, and neighbouring ranchers. More than 3,000 tons of hay were put up by the Bloods last season for their own use and for sale, which alone represents a vast amount of labour, and from the sales of hay the Indians realized over \$5,700. They sold over \$7,900 worth of beef; in freighting and wages they earned \$2,200, from the sales of ponies they realized \$2,700, and at the Raymond beet-fields their earnings amounted to \$9,000. Their total earnings for the year amounted to \$37,373.38, most of which is represented by transactions originating at or passing through the agency office.

One of our Indians named Black Horse, has a small coal mine on the banks of the St. Mary's river, from which he makes his living by mining and selling coal to the schools and settlers in the neighbourhood.

Stock. – It has long been recognized that in connection with the cattle industry lies a great hope for the future of these Indians. The grazing capabilities of their magnificent reservation and the natural interest of the Indians in live stock encourage the belief that in the ownership of large herds of cattle will be found a solution to most of the problems with which we are now confronted in connection with their management. To this end the department has for some years furnished annually a number of heifers to be issued to the Indians in a special effort to make cattle-owners of such members of the tribe as can with safety be entrusted with the care of horned stock. While this branch of our work is not yet complete, we have a creditable showing for the expenditure incurred. Last season we branded for the Indians over 1,600 calves, and their cattle have increased from 3,519 head in 1903 to their present number of 7,621. While striving to increase the number as rapidly as possible, careful attention has been paid to the matter of quality as is evidenced by the fact that we maintain a herd of 170 thoroughbred bulls. These are Shorthorns, Herefords and Galloways, many of which were imported from Manitoba and Ontario; but our best and cheapest bulls are those purchased by the department during the last four years

at the annual public auction of thoroughbred cattle held at Calgary under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture.

Although the winter just past was the most severe in twenty years and cattle losses unusually heavy, our cattle came through with probably the slightest losses of any in this district. This was in part due to the hardy quality of our cattle and partly to the superior condition of the range within the limits of the reservation.

Twenty-nine stallions supplied by the department are kept on the reserve for the improvement of the Indian horses.

**Buildings and Implements.** – While an improvement in the dwelling-houses of the Indians is apparent, the high price of lumber in this district makes progress in that direction slow. Quite a number, however, have improved their homes during the past year either by the erection of new houses or the improvement of old ones. Chief Ermine Horses has built a 28 x 28 frame cottage, with five rooms; Frank Red Crow has built a smaller frame house for himself, and several others are preparing to build houses of the same description.

A few acres of additional land for gardens have been fenced by the Indians this year. The fencing in of large tracts by individual Indians for pasturage is discouraged as having a tendency to destroy the grazing value of the reservation, but the breaking and fencing of land for agricultural purposes is encouraged and assisted in every way.

Owing to the success with which fall wheat has been grown for four or five years in Southern Alberta, it is felt that these Indians should try their hands at farming. As it has been decided to put under immediate cultivation a larger acreage than can be broken with Indian horses in any reasonable time, the Indians have purchased, with their own funds, a first-class steam ploughing outfit of 32 horse power, turning ten furrows, which will be mainly used for breaking land for subsequent cultivation with horses. A good start in this new direction has been made, as more than 400 acres of excellent land has already been well broken this spring with the steam plough. The first 50 acres was early seeded to oats, and the rest, together with whatever is meanwhile broken, will be sown with fall wheat in August.

To their already large working equipment the Indians added during the year, 3 wagons, 13 sets of work harness, 7 mowers, 4 rakes, 1 32-horse-power traction engine, 1 ten furrow engine gang plough, 6 disc harrows, 4 single disc seeders, 1 twelve foot land pulverizer and 4 three-section sets of lever harrows.

**Education and Religion.** – Two boarding schools are supported by the department in connection with this agency, one under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church and the other of the Church of England, with an aggregate attendance of 80 pupils. From these schools and from the reserve direct are obtained recruits for the industrial schools at Calgary and High River, which contain at present 33 pupils from this reservation.

**Temperance and Morality.** – The vigorous campaign against the traffic in intoxicants to Indians, which was instituted by the department's directions a year ago, has had a satisfactory effect. The many convictions which occurred last year drove some of the illicit dealers from the district, and others were apparently put out

of business, with the result that it is much more difficult for these Indians to buy liquor now than it was a year or two ago.

Progress. – Towards the goal of self-support further progress has been made during the year, and we now have 200 Indians who have ceased to draw any free food allowances from the department, and 134 additional ones contribute in part to their own support. Assistance in the shape of food-supplies issued to able-bodied Indians is being steadily reduced, in accordance with the policy which has been pursued for several years, with the result that a comparison of the issues of free beef in 1902-3 with those of the year just ended shows a reduction or saving of 273,000 pounds for the single year. By adhering to the policy of throwing the Indians upon their own resources as soon as their cattle herds and other means of support enable them to sustain themselves, all the able-bodied Indians of this reservation will within a very few years be self-supporting, and the department will be relieved of the necessity of assisting any but the permanently destitute members of the tribe, such as the aged and the blind.

I have, &c.,

R. N. WILSON,

*Indian Agent.*

May 31, 1908

Sir, – I have the honour to submit the annual report of this agency for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1908, together with the usual statement of agricultural and industrial statistics and inventory of government property.

Tribe. – The Blood Indians are the principal branch of the Blackfoot nation or family in the great Algonkian linguistic stock. The Blackfoot nation consists of the Blood, Blackfoot and Peigan tribes, located in Alberta, and a subdivision of the last named tribe known as the South Peigans, who are United States Indians located in Montana immediately south of the international line. These three tribes with their allies the Gross Ventres and the Sarcees, formed the Blackfoot confederacy, a powerful combination which for a century held by force of arms against all comers an extensive territory reaching from the Missouri river north to the Red Deer and from the Rockies east to beyond the Cypress hills. The protection of their vast territory against invasion imposed upon these Indians a life of almost constant warfare with the numerous enemies which surrounded them on all sides and developed in the people a proud and imperious spirit which after twenty-eight years of reservation life is still the prominent characteristic of the Bloods.

Reserve. – The Blood reserve is situated between the Belly and St. Mary's rivers, and from the forks of these streams runs in a southern direction for about 40 miles to within 14 miles of the international boundary. It contains an area of 540 square miles or some 354,000 acres of splendid land. The two rivers form the boundary line on the north, east and west sides, and furnish an abundant supply of fresh clear water. The south boundary is fenced with a line of barbed wire fencing 15 miles long. There is no building timber upon the reserve, but the river bottoms in

places have a fair growth of cotton-wood and willow, which form good shelter for cattle during cold weather. This is the largest Indian reservation in the Dominion.

Population. – The population of the reserve at the annuity payments last November was 1,178, being an increase of 10 for the year.

Health and Sanitation. – There have been no serious epidemics during the year and the general health of the Indians has been fair. The birth rate was 45 per 1,000 and the death-rate 35.

There is a good and commodious hospital on the reserve, sustained by the government and in charge of the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, where attention is given to patients requiring hospital treatment, the institution being regularly visited by the physician provided by the department.

That scourge of the Indian race, tuberculosis, in its two forms of scrofula and consumption of the lungs, is responsible for much of the sickness that occurs on this reservation. For the handling of this and other infections and contagious diseases we have an isolation hospital containing two small wards and a nurse's room.

Occupations. – Heretofore, the principal occupations of the Bloods have been cattle-raising, haymaking and freighting, to which must now be added farming, which will probably in a few years be the most important work engaged in by the Indians of this reservation as will be explained below under the head of 'Progress.'

The Raymond beet sugar industry has for several years furnished employment for a large number of the Bloods in the spring and fall. Last spring several hundreds of them were engaged for a month thinning beets in the fields, and in the month of October practically the whole population of the reservation was busy harvesting beets in the same fields. As whole families can be employed in pulling and topping beets, as well as in thinning them, the work is more profitable to the Indians than occupations in which the labour is restricted to the men.

Black-horses still operates the coal mine which has been working for many years, and acquires a considerable income from the sale of coal to the public.

Stock. – Owing to the exceptional grazing capabilities of this magnificent reservation, it has long been recognized that in connection with the cattle industry lies a great hope for the future of these Indians, a belief that is encouraged by the natural fondness of the plains' Indians for live stock. Being convinced that in the ownership of large herds of cattle will be found a solution to most of the problems with which we have had to contend in connection with their management, the department for some years furnished annually a number of heifers which were issued to the Indians in a special effort to make cattle-owners of such members of the tribe as could with safety be intrusted with the care of horned stock. This work is not finished, as there are still many young Indians to be given the necessary start, but the showing to date is quite satisfactory. At the last round-up we branded 1,146 Indian calves, and carefully counted the whole herd, which was found to number 5,537 head, showing that our losses during the preceding bad winter were much lighter than the average throughout the district. In the management of these cattle special attention has been given to the matter of quality, which has entailed the purchase and maintenance of an expensive herd of thoroughbred bulls, numbering at

the present time 157 head. A few are Galloways, but most of the older bulls are Shorthorns, while most of the young animals purchased during the last three years are Herefords. All these bulls are pedigreed stock. Some we bought in Ontario and Manitoba, but the best and cheapest bulls are those purchased by the department at the annual public auction sale of thoroughbred cattle held at Calgary under the direction of the Department of Agriculture.

Like most Indians of the plains, the Bloods own considerable numbers of native horses, and in order to improve their quality the department keeps on the reservation twenty-nine stallions, which are loaned out to the Indians under appropriate conditions.

Education and Religion. – In connection with this agency the department supports two boarding schools, one in charge of the Church of England, and the other under the Roman Catholic Church, the aggregate attendance being 90 pupils. From the latter school and from the reserve direct are obtained recruits for the industrial school at High River, which contains 21 pupils from this reservation.

In religious belief and practice the Bloods are mostly pagan.

Progress. – The extensive and successful growing of fall wheat in South Alberta during the last five or six years having demonstrated the practicability of that industry to the occupations of the Blood Indians, it was decided to go actively into farming last year. As the Bloods are a large community any work undertaken by them must be on a fairly large scale to be worth while. It was, therefore, thought advisable to place under immediate cultivation a large acreage, and as the initial work of breaking the sod is too heavy for Indian horses to accomplish, except in a limited way, the Indians, upon the advice of the writer, decided to purchase with tribal funds a first-class steam ploughing outfit consisting of a 32 h.p. traction engine and a ten furrow engine gang plough, the intention being to use the steam rig for breaking only, all subsequent work to be done by the Indians with horses. The machinery arrived in due course, and with it 820 acres were broken up for fifteen Indians, who, after thoroughly disking the land, seeded in the month of August an average of forty acres each with fall wheat, the rest being reserved for oats, which were put in this spring, making a total of 820 acres for the first crop. The 600 acres of wheat obtained a good start last fall and came on in the spring with a splendid growth. At the time of writing it is in a perfect condition, there not having been a patch winter-killed on any of the fifteen farms. All the Indian farmers have insured their crops against hail. Under the system adopted these farms are located in groups to facilitate the use of the steam plough, which works to better advantage on a long furrow of a mile or more, to permit economy in implements and to enable the supervision to be done with greater ease and by less men than would be possible were the farms scattered all over the reserve. While the first fifteen farms are thus adjoining each other in a solid block, there is no community of interest in the ownership of the joint fence that was built by the fifteen Indians to inclose the whole area and in the use of implements. Each man owns his own farm, and, after it is once broken for him, works it individually without having any interest in the work or produce of any of the adjoining farms.

A second block of land, containing 432 acres, is being broken about 15 miles from the first one, and this will, when finished within a few days, be issued to eight Indians selected from a large number who have applied for it. The intention is to continue the breaking until every working Indian on the reserve is supplied with whatever acreage he is capable of cultivating, there being of course a great difference in what individuals can handle.

Though a clamorous minority of the older Indians, headed by some of the principal chiefs, were opposed to the farming scheme, the working element, which is in the majority, is so favourable to the project that the applications for land now aggregate as much acreage as the steam plough will be able to break in two years.

The policy of placing each Indian upon his own resources as soon as they are sufficient for the sustenance of himself and family, has been steadily maintained. The Bloods who are entirely self-supporting now number 269, and a large number are semi-self-supporting.

To illustrate the extent of the reduction that has been effected in free food-issues at this agency, it may be stated that five years ago the issue of free beef amounted to more than 451,000 pounds, while during the fiscal year just ended the free beef issued totalled but 139,00 pounds, a saving of 312,000 pounds in the year.

Temperance and Morality. – The results are still apparent of the department's campaign of two years ago against the traffic in intoxicants to Indians, as there are few cases of drunkenness now reported.

The morality question is at present a more serious one on this reservation, the transgressors being principally young married people who, after quarrelling, separate and insist upon availing themselves of the old tribal right to take other partners. As it is only necessary for them to dispense with formal marriage in the second union in order to evade the statutes, these cases are sometimes difficult for an Indian agent to handle.

I have, &c.,

R. N. WILSON,

*Indian Agent.*

June 6, 1909

Sir, – I have the honour to submit the annual report of this agency for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1909, together with the usual statement of agricultural and industrial statistics and inventory of government property.

Tribe. – The Blood Indians are the principal branch of the Blackfoot nation or family in the great Algonkian linguistic stock. The Blackfoot nation consists of the Blood, Blackfoot and Peigan tribes, located in Alberta, and a subdivision of the last named tribe known as the South Peigans, who are United States Indians located in Montana immediately south of the international line. These three tribes with their allies the Gross Ventres and the Sarcees, formed the Blackfoot confederacy, a powerful combination which for a century held by force of arms against all comers an extensive territory reaching from the Missouri river north to the Red Deer and from the Rockies east to beyond the Cypress hills. The protection of their vast territory

against invasion imposed upon these Indians a life of almost constant warfare with the numerous enemies which surrounded them on all sides and developed in the people a proud and imperious spirit which after 28 years of reservation life is still the prominent characteristic of the Bloods.

Reserve. – The Blood reserve is situated between the Belly and St. Mary's rivers, and from the forks of these streams runs in a southern direction for about 40 miles to within 14 miles of the international boundary. It contains an area of 540 square miles or some 354,000 acres of splendid land. The two rivers form the boundary line on the north, east and west sides, and furnish an abundant supply of fresh clear water. The south boundary is fenced with a line of barbed wire fencing 15 miles long. There is no building timber upon the reserve, but the river bottoms in places have a fair growth of cotton-wood and willow, which form good shelter for cattle during cold weather. This is the largest Indian reservation in the Dominion.

Population. – The population of the reserve at the annuity payments last November was 1,174, being a decrease of 4 for the year. The birth-rate was 42 per 1,000 and the death-rate 47.

Health and Sanitation. – Last fall we had an outbreak of scarlet fever, followed by an epidemic of measles, and though every reported case was quarantined, there were many deaths among the children. As these epidemics occurred after the annuity payments, the mortality connected with them will not be fully ascertained until the annual census is taken in October immediately before the next payment, and will be shown in the next report.

There is a good and commodious hospital on the reserve, sustained by the government and in charge of the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, where attention is given to patients requiring hospital treatment, the institution being regularly visited by the physician provided by the department.

Tuberculosis, that scourge of the Indian race, in its two forms of scrofula and consumption of the lungs, is responsible for much of the sickness that occurs on this reservation. For the handling of this and other infections and contagious diseases we have an isolation hospital containing two small wards and a nurses' room.

Occupations. – The principal occupations of the Bloods are cattle-raising, farming, haymaking and freighting. The effort in the direction of farming inaugurated in 1907 was rewarded with complete success, a first-class crop being harvested last fall on all of the 600 acres seeded to fall wheat, with the result that the aggregate earnings of the tribe were much increased. From one source and another, including beef and farm products, these Indians earned over \$68,000 during the year..

The Indian named Black-horses still operates the coal mine on the St. Mary river which he has been working for many years, and from which he derives an income sufficient for the support of his large family.

Stock. – Owing to the exceptional grazing capabilities of this magnificent reservation, it has long been recognized that in connection with the cattle industry lies a great hope for the future of these Indians, a belief that is encouraged by the natural fondness of the plains' Indians for live stock. Being convinced that in the

ownership of large herds of cattle will be found a solution to most of the problems with which we have had to contend in connection with their management, the department for some years furnished annually a number of heifers which were issued to the Indians in a special effort to make cattle-owners of such members of the tribe as could with safety be intrusted with the care of horned stock. This work is not finished, as there are still many young Indians to be given the necessary start, but the showing to date is quite satisfactory. At the last round-up we branded 1,667 calves, and carefully counted the whole herd, which was found to number 7,348 head. In the management of these cattle special attention has been given to the matter of quality, which has entailed the purchase and maintenance of an expensive herd of thoroughbred bulls, numbering at the present time 146 head. A few are Galloways, but most of the older bulls are Shorthorns, while most of the young animals purchased during the last three years are Herefords. All these bulls are pedigreed stock. Some we bought in Ontario and Manitoba, but the best and cheapest bulls are those purchased by the department at the annual public auction sale of thoroughbred cattle held at Calgary under the direction of the Department of Agriculture.

Like most Indians of the plains, the Bloods own considerable numbers of native horses, and in order to improve their quality the department keeps on the reservation 37 stallions, which are loaned out to the Indians under appropriate conditions.

While the cattle-owning members of the tribe have for five years raised all the beef required for the consumption of the whole tribe, they never sold any beef animals to outsiders until last fall, when two sales were made, both to Messrs. Bater and McLean, of Winnipeg. The first shipment of 102 head of prime export steers brought the record figure of \$65 per head, and these were exported to Liverpool, where the beef was much admired and is said to have sold for half a cent more per pound than any other beef then on the market, which speaks well for the quality of Blood Indian cattle. The second shipment of 100 head was of inferior quality to the first lot, but sold for 455 per head, which was also a high figure. All these steers were, of course, range-bred animals that had never had any feed other than the grass on the prairie of the reservation.

Education and Religion. — In connection with this agency the department supports two boarding schools, one in charge of the Church of England, and the other under the Roman Catholic Church. From the latter school and from the reserve direct are obtained recruits for the industrial school at High River.

In religious belief and practice the Bloods are mostly pagan.

Progress. — The marvelous success with which the extensive growing of wheat has been attended in recent years in this part of the province having established the practicability of adding that industry to the occupations of the Bloods, it was decided to go actively into farming in 1907. As the Bloods are a large community, any work undertaken by them must be on a fairly large scale to be worth while. It was, therefore, thought advisable to place under immediate cultivation a large acreage, and, as the initial work of breaking the sod is too heavy for Indian horses to accomplish, except in a limited way, the Indians, upon the advice of the writer, decided to purchase with tribal funds a first-class steam ploughing outfit, consisting

of a 32 horse-power traction engine and a ten furrow engine gang plough, the intention being to use the steam rig for breaking only, all subsequent work to be done by the Indians with horses. The machinery was put in operation in the spring of 1907, and 820 acres were broken up and issued to fifteen Indians, who, after thoroughly disking the land, seeded in the month of August an average of 40 acres each with fall wheat, the rest being reserved for oats in the following spring, making 820 acres for the initial crop. The wheat made a good fall growth; came nicely through the winter, and was ready for cutting before the end of July. A 40-60 threshing-machine having been purchased with tribal funds, to be operated by our large traction engine, stook threshing was begun in August, each Indian's farm being threshed separately, the spout of the separator emptying direct into portable granaries, of which each farmer had one or two, according to the bulk of his crop. From the 60 acres 23,000 bushels of No. 1 Red were threshed; the largest individual yield being that of Emile Bull Shield, who got 48 bushels to the acre. At the conclusion of the threshing the wheat was sold, hauled 10 or 12 miles to a siding on the reserve and shipped to Fort William, the twenty cars being loaded in thirty days. Out of the proceeds of the crop each Indian paid back to the trust fund all advances that had been made to him, including cost of breaking land, seed, fencing, granaries; and after all settlements each had a very substantial balance to his credit in the bank, where considerable of it still is.

Chief Running Antelope, who bought out one of the other Indians while the crop was growing and thus harvested 80 acres, had a cash balance of \$1,309.46 after paying all debts or advances of every nature. Emile Bull Shield came next, with a similar net balance of \$1,203.59. Tallow took third place, with clear profits of \$1,200.81, and the others retained balances of varying amounts according to their crop. The money was in the case of most individuals well spent, in the erection of new dwellings, the purchase of horses, new wagons, harness and other articles of lasting benefit. Those of the farmers who were not already self-supporting became so after the sale of their grain.

While this wheat crop of 1908 was growing, the steam ploughing outfit broke up two other blocks of land, containing a little over 400 acres each, which were divided into fourteen farms, issued to that number of Indians, disked and seeded by them, and, though these crops did not show as good growth last fall as those of the previous year, the grain is now growing well, and a good yield is expected.

This year the plough is again in operation and at the date of writing has broken an additional 400 acres, bringing the cultivated area up to 2,000 acres, which will doubtless be materially increased before the end of the season. The intention is to continue the breaking until every working Indian on the reserve is supplied with whatever acreage he is capable of cultivating, there being, of course, a great difference in what individuals can handle.

Under the system adopted, these farms are located in groups to facilitate the use of the steam plough, which works to better advantage on a long furrow of a mile or more, to permit economy in implements, and to enable the supervision to be done with greater ease and by less men than would be possible were the farms scattered all over the reserve. Thus, while the first fifteen farms are adjoining one another in a

solid block, there is no community of interest except in the ownership of the joint fence that was built by the fifteen Indians to inclose the whole area, and in the use of implements. Each man owns his own farm, and after it is once broken for him, works it individually without having any interest in the work or produce of any of the adjoining farms.

The general policy of placing each Indian upon his own resources as soon as they are sufficient for the sustenance of himself and his family, has been steadily maintained, with the result that those of the Bloods who are entirely self-supporting now number 301, and a large number are semi-self-supporting.

Temperance and Morality. – The ease with which these Indians can procure whisky and other intoxicants in the neighbouring towns of Macleod, Lethbridge and Cardston, is exceedingly detrimental to the welfare of the people, and a matter of continual worry to those in charge of them.

I have, &c.,

R. N. WILSON,

*Indian Agent.*

June 7, 1910

Sir, – I have the honour to submit the annual report of this agency for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1910, together with the usual statement of agricultural and industrial statistics and inventory of government property.

Tribe. – The Blood Indians are the principal branch of the Blackfoot nation or family in the great Algonkian linguistic stock. The Blackfoot nation consists of the Blood, Blackfoot and Peigan tribes, located in Alberta, and a subdivision of the last named tribe known as the South Peigans, who are United States Indians located in Montana immediately south of the international line. These three tribes with their allies the Gross Ventres and the Sarcees, formed the Blackfoot confederacy, a powerful combination which for a century held by force of arms against all comers an extensive territory reaching from the Missouri river north to the Red Deer and from the Rockies east to beyond the Cypress hills. The protection of their vast territory against invasion imposed upon these Indians a life of almost constant warfare with the numerous enemies which surrounded them on all sides and developed in the people a proud and imperious spirit which after 28 years of reservation life is still the prominent characteristic of the Bloods.

Reserve. – The Blood reserve is situated between the Belly and St. Mary's rivers, and from the forks of these streams runs in a southern direction for about 40 miles to within 14 miles of the international boundary. It contains an area of 540 square miles or some 354,000 acres of splendid land. The two rivers form the boundary line on the north, east and west sides, and furnish an abundant supply of fresh clear water. The south boundary is fenced with a line of barbed wire fencing 15 miles long. There is no building timber upon the reserve, but the river bottoms in places have a fair growth of cotton-wood and willow, which form good shelter for cattle during cold weather. This is the largest Indian reservation in the Dominion.

Population. – The population of the reserve at the annuity payments last November was 1,149, being a decrease of 25 for the year. The birth-rate was 47 per 1,000 and the death-rate 61. The decrease mentioned above includes 9 absentees, leaving a natural decrease of 16.

Health and Sanitation. – The general health of the Indians has been fair.

There is a good and commodious hospital on the reserve, sustained by the government and in charge of the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, where attention is given to patients requiring hospital treatment, the institution being regularly visited by the physician provided by the department.

Tuberculosis, that scourge of the Indian race, in its two forms of scrofula and consumption of the lungs, is responsible for much of the sickness that occurs on this reservation. For the handling of this and other infections and contagious diseases we have an isolation hospital containing two small wards and a nurses' room.

Occupations. – The principal occupations of the Bloods are cattle-raising, farming, haymaking and freighting.

The Indian named Black-horses still operates the coal mine on the St. Mary river which he has been working for many years, and from which he derives an income sufficient for the support of his large family.

Stock. – Owing to the exceptional grazing capabilities of this magnificent reservation, it has long been recognized that in connection with the cattle industry lies a great hope for the future of these Indians, a belief that is encouraged by the natural fondness of the plains' Indians for live stock. Being convinced that in the ownership of large herds of cattle will be found a solution to most of the problems with which we have had to contend in connection with their management, the department for some years furnished annually a number of heifers which were issued to the Indians in a special effort to make cattle-owners of such members of the tribe as could with safety be intrusted with the care of horned stock. This work is not finished, as there are still many young Indians to be given the necessary start, but the showing to date is quite satisfactory. At the last round-up we branded 980 calves and carefully counted the whole herd, which was found to number 5,285. In the management of these cattle special attention has been given to the matter of quality, which has entailed the purchase and maintenance of an expensive herd of thoroughbred bulls, numbering at the present time 143 head. A few are Galloways, but most of the older bulls are Shorthorns, while most of the young animals purchased during the last three years are Herefords. All these bulls are pedigreed stock. Some we bought in Ontario and Manitoba, but the best and cheapest bulls are those purchased by the department at the annual public auction sale of thoroughbred cattle held at Calgary under the direction of the Department of Agriculture.

Like most Indians of the plains, the Bloods own considerable numbers of native horses, and in order to improve their quality the department keeps on the reservation 37 stallions, which are loaned out to the Indians under appropriate conditions.

While the cattle-owning members of the tribe have for six years raised all the beef required for the consumption of the whole tribe and have also made several important shipments of export cattle to Liverpool.

Temperance and Morality. – The ease with which these Indians can procure whisky and other intoxicants in the neighbouring towns of Macleod, Lethbridge and Cardston, is exceedingly detrimental to the welfare of the people, and a matter of continual worry to those in charge of them.

Progress. – The marvelous success with which the extensive growing of wheat has been attended in recent years in this part of the province having established the practicability of adding that industry to the occupations of the Bloods, it was decided to go actively into farming in 1907. As the Bloods are a large community, any work undertaken by them must be on a fairly large scale to be worth while. It was, therefore, thought advisable to place under immediate cultivation a large acreage, and, as the initial work of breaking the sod is too heavy for Indian horses to accomplish, except in a limited way, the Indians, upon the advice of the writer, decided to purchase with tribal funds a first-class steam ploughing outfit, consisting of a 32 horse-power traction engine and a ten furrow engine gang plough, the intention being to use the steam rig for breaking only, all subsequent work to be done by the Indians with horses.

The machinery was put in operation in 1907, and a total of 2,392 acres were broken up and placed under cultivation in that and the two following seasons. From the initial crop in 1908 the Indian farmers raised 23,000 bushels of No. 1 Red Winter wheat off 600 acres. Last year they raised 24,000 bushels, which unfortunately suffered from frost about two weeks before harvest and consequently graded low; but the grain was held until February and sold upon a bulge in the market at a high price that netted the Indians more money for their frozen wheat than they received for the No. 1 the year before.

The Bloods have their own threshing outfit, a 40-60 separator with latest attachments having been purchased with tribal funds for operation with the large traction engine. Stack-threshing is the method followed, each Indian's farm being threshed separately, the spout of the separator emptying direct into portable granaries, of which each farmer has one or two according to the bulk of his crop.

Under the system adopted, these farms are located in groups to facilitate the use of the steam plough, which works to better advantage on a long furrow of a mile or more, to permit economy in implements, and to enable the supervision to be done with greater ease and by less men than would be possible were the farms scattered all over the reserve. Thus, while the first fifteen farms are adjoining one another in a solid block, there is no community of interest except in the ownership of the joint fence that was built by the fifteen Indians to inclose the whole area, and in the use of implements. Each man owns his own farm, and after it is once broken for him, works it individually without having any interest in the work or produce of any of the adjoining farms.

The general policy of placing each Indian upon his own resources as soon as they are sufficient for the sustenance of himself and his family, has been steadily maintained, with the result that the Bloods who are entirely self-supporting now number 25 per cent of the whole population, of which 50 per cent are semi-self-supporting.

I have, &c.,  
R. N. WILSON,  
*Indian Agent.*

June 11, 1911

Sir, – I have the honour to submit the annual report of this agency for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1911, together with the usual statement of agricultural and industrial statistics and inventory of government property.

Tribe. – The Blood Indians are the principal branch of the Blackfoot nation or family in the great Algonkian linguistic stock. The Blackfoot nation consists of the Blood, Blackfoot and Peigan tribes, located in Alberta, and a subdivision of the last named tribe known as the South Peigans, who are United States Indians located in Montana immediately south of the international line. These three tribes with their allies the Gross Ventres and the Sarcees, formed the Blackfoot confederacy, a powerful combination which for a century held by force of arms against all comers an extensive territory reaching from the Missouri river north to the Red Deer and from the Rockies east to beyond the Cypress hills. The protection of their vast territory against invasion imposed upon these Indians a life of almost constant warfare with the numerous enemies which surrounded them on all sides and developed in the people a proud and imperious spirit which after 28 years of reservation life is still the prominent characteristic of the Bloods.

Reserve. – The Blood reserve is situated between the Belly and St. Mary's rivers, and from the forks of these streams runs in a southern direction for about 40 miles to within 14 miles of the international boundary. It contains an area of 540 square miles or some 354,000 acres of splendid land. The two rivers form the boundary line on the north, east and west sides, and furnish an abundant supply of fresh clear water. The south boundary is fenced with a line of barbed wire fencing 15 miles long. There is no building timber upon the reserve, but the river bottoms in places have a fair growth of cotton-wood and willow, which form good shelter for cattle during cold weather. This is the largest Indian reservation in the Dominion.

Population. – The population of the reserve at the annuity payments last November was 1,122, being a decrease for the year of 27. The birth-rate was 46 per thousand, and the death-rate 71.

Health and Sanitation. – The general health of the Indians has been fair.

There is a good and commodious hospital on the reserve, sustained by the government and in charge of the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity, where attention is given to patients requiring hospital treatment, the institution being regularly visited by the physician provided by the department.

Tuberculosis, that scourge of the Indian race, in its two forms of scrofula and consumption of the lungs, is responsible for much of the sickness that occurs on this reservation. For the handling of this and other infections and contagious diseases we have an isolation hospital containing two small wards and a nurses' room.

Occupations. – The principal occupations of the Bloods are cattle-raising, farming, haymaking and freighting.

The Indian named Black-horses still operates the coal mine on the St. Mary river which he has been working for many years, and from which he derives an income sufficient for the support of his large family.

Stock. – Owing to the exceptional grazing capabilities of this magnificent reservation, it has long been recognized that in connection with the cattle industry lies a great hope for the future of these Indians, a belief that is encouraged by the natural fondness of the plains' Indians for live stock. Being convinced that in the ownership of large herds of cattle will be found a solution to most of the problems with which we have had to contend in connection with their management, the department for some years furnished annually a number of heifers which were issued to the Indians in a special effort to make cattle-owners of such members of the tribe as could with safety be intrusted with the care of horned stock. This work is not finished, as there are still many young Indians to be given the necessary start, but the showing to date is quite satisfactory. At the last round-up we branded 1,470 calves. In the management of these cattle special attention has been given to the matter of quality, which has entailed the purchase and maintenance of an expensive herd of thoroughbred bulls, numbering at the present time 148. A few are Galloways, but most of the older bulls are Shorthorns, while most of the young animals purchased during the last three years are Herefords. All these bulls are pedigreed stock. Some we bought in Ontario and Manitoba, but the best and cheapest bulls are those purchased by the department at the annual public auction sale of thoroughbred cattle held at Calgary under the direction of the Department of Agriculture.

The cattle-owning members of the tribe have for seven years raised all the beef required for the consumption of the whole tribe and have also made several important shipments of export cattle to Liverpool. During the past season we sold for the Liverpool market one shipment of 200 head of Indian steers at \$78 per head f.o.b. here, which is a record price for range animals that had grazed every winter since they were calved.

The 1,470 calves branded in 1910 is the largest number that the Bloods have ever raised in a single year. But I regret to say that, owing to the exceptional severity of last winter, there is no prospect of such a successful branding being repeated this year. The unusually fierce storms of January, coupled with deep snow in that, and the succeeding months, caused such heavy losses among the cattle on these ranges that a count like this year can hardly fail to show a decrease in the herds, particularly with regard to female stock.

Like most Indians of the plains, the Bloods own considerable numbers of native horses, and in order to improve their quality the department keeps on the reservation 46 stallions, which are loaned out to the Indians under appropriate conditions.

Temperance and Morality. – The ease with which these Indians can procure intoxicating liquor is, I regret to say, increasing in the towns of Macleod, Lethbridge and Cardston, and this unfortunate feature is not only a source of disturbance and continual worry to the officials in charge of the Indians, but it is exceedingly detrimental to the interests of the department's wards. There are several reasons why the traffic in intoxicants to Indians flourishes at present more unchecked than

in former years, the most potent of which is to be found in the changes which have occurred in connection with the police service of western towns. Formerly when this work was done exclusively by detachments and patrols of the Northwest Mounted Police they, as employees of the Dominion government, paid particular attention to the protection of the Indians from the liquor traffic. In recent years, however, the larger organization has relinquished police work in the towns and cities in favour of the municipal constables, who, in the writer's experience, very rarely take any interest in the enforcement of the Indian Act. As a consequence it is easier for Blood Indians to procure a dozen bottles of whisky under present conditions than a single bottle a few years ago when the purchasers and vendors had to dodge the patrols and detectives of the Mounted Police.

Progress. – The marvelous success with which the extensive growing of wheat has been attended in recent years in this part of the province having established the practicability of adding that industry to the occupations of the Bloods, it was decided to go actively into farming in 1907. As the Bloods are a large community, any work undertaken by them must be on a fairly large scale to be worth while. It was, therefore, thought advisable to place under immediate cultivation a large acreage, and, as the initial work of breaking the sod is too heavy for Indian horses to accomplish, except in a limited way, the Indians, upon the advice of the writer, decided to purchase with tribal funds a first-class steam ploughing outfit, consisting of a 32 horse-power traction engine and a ten furrow engine gang plough, the intention being to use the steam rig for breaking only, all subsequent work to be done by the Indians with horses.

The plan was followed with success, and in 1908 the initial crop was harvested from 600 acres producing 23,000 bushels of No. 1 Red Winter wheat. Next year they raised 24,000 bushels, and farming having now become so popular, the Indians themselves requested that a second steam ploughing outfit be purchased from their tribal funds, which was acceded to by the department, and a 36 H.P. steam tractor of the latest and strongest pattern was bought last year. There are now 3,000 acres under cultivation on the reserve, farmed by 39 individual Indians. Additional land is being broken this year to accommodate fifteen more applicants, and, unless the breaking is retarded by scarcity of fuel in consequence of the present strike of coal miners, there should be 54 Blood Indian farmers with crops to harvest next year.

The Bloods have their own threshing outfit, a 40-60 separator with latest attachments having been purchased with tribal funds for operation with the large traction engine. Stack-threshing is the method followed, each Indian's farm being threshed separately, the spout of the separator emptying direct into portable granaries, of which each farmer has one or two according to the bulk of his crop.

Under the system adopted, these farms are located in groups to facilitate the use of the steam plough, which works to better advantage on a long furrow of a mile or more, to permit economy in implements, and to enable the supervision to be done with greater ease and by less men than would be possible were the farms scattered all over the reserve. Thus, while the first fifteen farms are adjoining one another in a solid block, there is no community of interest except in the ownership of the joint

fence that was built by the fifteen Indians to inclose the whole area, and in the use of implements. Each man owns his own farm, and after it is once broken for him, works it individually without having any interest in the work or produce of any of the adjoining farms.

The general policy of placing each Indian upon his own resources as soon as they are sufficient for the sustenance of himself and his family, has been steadily maintained, with the result that a fair proportion of the Bloods are entirely self-supporting; but this feature of their management has in late years been somewhat overdone, as it has recently been necessary to return to the free ration list a few individuals who were for a time able to support themselves from their cattle herds, but were unable to continue doing so owing to the reduction of the cattle through unnatural losses.

Your obedient servant,

R. N. WILSON,  
*Indian Agent.*